A SERMON

PREACH'D AT THE

Morning Lecture in Exon,

MARCH the 8th, 17$^{10}_{11}$,

Being the DAY of

Her Majesty's

Happy Accession to the Throne.

By *THOMAS BISHOP*

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PSALM CXLIV. *Verse* XV.

Happy is that People that is in such a Case: Yea, Happy is that People whose God is the Lord.

AMONGST the various Thoughts that present themselves to our Minds, none are more agreeable than those, which relate to our own *Happiness*. There's a particular Satisfaction that attends both a Review of Blessings *receiv'd*, and a Contrivance for those we *want*; and this, besides the Pleasure of it, Providence invites us to this Morning. 'Twas not long since, that God was pleased to bestow a signal Blessing on this Kingdom on this Day: He then by a kind Hand led to our Throne, one *who* has prov'd a *Nursing Mother* to us her Subjects: And how can we better begin this joyful Day, than by considering the publick Mercies we share in, and what is further necessary to make us a *happy Nation?*

THIS Practice we have an encouraging Example of before us; for *David*, the sacred Penman of this *Psalm*, having gratefully remembred the Favours he and his People had received, and reckon'd up, and pray'd for what he still desir'd, in my Text (according to our Translation) he anticipated their Happiness when his Requests should be granted: *Happy is that People that is in such a Case.*

IN treating of these Words, I shall not confine my self to the State of *Israel*, to which they particularly refer; but shall beg leave to observe this Method.

I. TO shew you what Things are required to make a Nation or People happy.

II. HOW we may obtain and prolong these Blessings. And

III. THEN conclude with some suitable Reflections on the whole.

I. I shall mention to you the Things that are required to make a People happy.

1st. ONE Thing required, is good Government, a Freedom from *Licentiousness* on one Hand, and *Absolute Monarchy* on t'other.

THE Beauty of the visible World consists much in the wise Disproportion of its Parts. To see an humble Valley, and then a tall Mountain, at once overlooking and defending it, is a very pleasing Prospect. And one of the greatest Ornaments to a Kingdom, is a proper Distinction in its Members: For a Body to be without a Head, or with one that overloads and oppresses it, is equally monstrous: And for a People to be without a Governour, or with one left to his own Rage and Fury, is equally grievous. Should *Anarchy* obtain amongst us, was every one to be his own Judge and Lawgiver, we should run into endless Confusions; there would be no Safety or Security, but as 'tis amongst the Inhabitants of the Forrest, the Weak must fall a Prey to the Strong, and the Meek and Innocent to the more Cruel and Devouring. Was an *unlimited Monarch* advanced to our Throne, one that was neither circumscribed by Law himself, nor gave any but his Will to his People, he may at pleasure act the *Tyrant*, and we must submit like tame *Slaves*: Nothing we possest could be call'd our own; this arbitrary *King*, as the Prophet expresses it, 1 *Sam.* 8.

might

Might take our Sons, and appoint them for himself, our Daughters to be Confectionaries, our Fields, and Vineyards, and Olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his Servants; our Men-Servants and Maid-Servants, and goodliest young Men and Asses, and put them to his Work, and we should be his Servants. Then we should have no Incouragement for Increase or Improvement; for when we had lain in our best Provisions, should this *Lyon* grasp it in his Paw, like the meaner Herd we must fly and leave it: Then we should have no Liberty or Freedom left, but should be forced to submit to any Chains by which he should confine or load us. To be plac'd therefore between these two Extremes, must be safest and most desirable. To be sway'd by a measured *Scepter*; to sit beneath a fixed and yet sufficiently exalted *Throne*, must be necessary to the *Happiness of a People.*

2dly. Another Thing required to make a People *happy*, is the pure Religion and Worship of God.

Let a Nation be cloathed with all the Charms of Wealth and Greatness; if it has nothing else to recommend it, 'twill make but a poor and mean Figure. There's something to be regarded by Mankind, besides the external Ornament: The rational World must be judg'd, not so much by outward Appearance, as the internal Furniture and Accomplishment. Men have Souls as well as Bodies; and unless they are handsomly adorned, they have but little, very little, to boast of. As long as Ignorance, Superstition, or Idolatry cloud a Nation, in vain does the Sun of Prosperity shine upon it. 'Tis not a grand Alliance, a brisk Trade, or Security from Enemies, that can establish the Happiness of a Kingdom: The Safety and Felicity of Societies, is owing to *God* alone: All the Mercies that fall on any part of the World, are dropt from *Heaven*; and tho' they are sometimes, yet they are not usually rain'd indifferently on any Soil: But *God*, like a wise Husbandman, scatters his Favours *most* on that Ground that produces *best*. If we trace the Footsteps of Antiquity, look into either sacred or prophane History, we shall find, that our *Heavenly*

venly Father has been very different in his Carriage to his *Children:* The Perverse and Stubborn have been severely chastised, whereas the Dutiful and Obedient have been cherished, rewarded, and encouraged. When the *Israelites*, God's *peculiar People*, went astray from their Fold; God, their Shepherd, departed from them, suffered them to fall a Prey to such as worried and devoured them: But as soon as ever they discovered their Wanderings, and were willing to return to their ancient Pasture, he gladly received them, and willingly fed and led them again. When *they turned not aside from following the Lord, but served him with all their Hearts, he for his great Name's Sake, would not forsake them: But if they did wickedly, they and their King* were to be consumed, 1 *Sam.* 12. latter part of that Chapter. *Solomon*'s Remark is continually verify'd, That tho' *Sin is a Reproach to any People, Righteousness exalteth a Nation*, Prov. 14. 34. In God's Church, as well as in his Temple of old, his Glory may be seen. Where the *Ark* is lodg'd, the People, like *Obededom*, are generally blessed. They who rightly bow at the *Footstool*, are mercifully regarded from the *Throne:* They who embrace God's Revelations, honour his Institutions, follow his Directions, add nothing to, nor diminish from his prescribed Worship; those are particularly and signally loved and favoured: Whereas they who reject those Discoveries he has made, and those Rules he has given; or, if they receive them, are not content with their Plainness, but must adorn or compleat them by their own Inventions, surely such reflect on the *Wisdom*, question the *Mercy*, and usurp the *Government* of God, and shall one time or other be remarkably punished. Therefore the true, the pure Religion, is absolutely necessary to the Happiness of a People.

3dly. ANOTHER Thing required to make a People happy, is *Liberty of Conscience* in religious Matters.

AS there's a vast Variety in the material World, so is there in the World of Spirits. Men scarce differ more in their *Stature* and *Complexion*, than they do in

their

their *Judgment* and *Apprehension*. Our Souls, whilst in these frail Tabernacles, are much influen'd by their different Make and Composition: Our Bodies are the Instruments by which our Souls at present act, and according to their Fitness for Service, are all our spiritual Operations. As Men differ in their bodily Tempers and Constitutions; so do they in their mental Powers and Capacities: As one Man's Eye may be clearer, or his Arm stronger than anothers; so one Man's Understanding may be brighter, and his Reason quicker than his Brothers: And because our Faculties are thus different, our Opinions must necessarily be so. Our Thoughts of all things in the World are the most free and ungovernable: Like the Waves of the Sea, they can be bounded by none but the Almighty. We may as easily warp all our Bodies into the same *Form*, as give each of our Minds the very same *Turn*. Tho' the *Unity of the Spirit* may be kept by the *Bond of Peace and Love*, it can't by an exact Parity or Resemblance: To endeavour this, as 'tis no where required, so 'twould be no way profitable, but extremely injurious. Among the *Spheres* above, there's an exact Order and Harmony, and yet they have different Courses, different Qualities, and different Proportions; and to alter this, would in probability damage, if not ruin the World. In our Bodies there are different Members and Organs, and to force the Shape of either, would not only lessen their Beauty, and unfit them for use, but also incommode the whole *Composition*. Thus in the *Body Politick*, should all of different Powers and Inclinations, be bent by Violence the same way, 'twould create much Uneasiness: Should any way of Worship be rigorously imposed on us, there being such different Abilities, 'twould be a Yoke which (as our Fathers could not, so) we should not be able to bear: Should we be forc'd within the Limits of any particular Opinion, the Space would be too narrow to contain us all. Not only some would lose that Freedom, to which, if to any thing they have a Right; but all, tho' not with an equal Sense, must share in the Smart: The whole

whole Society must be weaken'd and infeebled; and therefore that Liberty which prevents this Disorder, is a necessary, and God grant it may be a lasting Blessing.

4thly. ANOTHER Requisite to the *Happiness of a People*, is Peace and Union.

AS there is nothing more weakens, or sooner destroys a Man, than internal *Pain* and *Disorder*; so there is nothing sooner ruins a State than *Discord* and *Division*. Let a People be ever so securely guarded against foreign Invasion, if Rebellion spread and flourish, they can't long maintain themselves. If an Enemy is at a *Distance*, we may provide against him, and know how to resist his visible Approaches: But if there's one Latent in our own *House*, we are unacquainted with our Danger, and our Preservation must be very difficult. *Divide, & impera*, has been an experienc'd and successful *Maxim* in Politicks. Sideing and Parties in Kingdoms, is the common Foundation of Plots and Treasons, and the Door by which their Destruction usually enters. A too great Heat but in *one part* of a Nation, may, if not timely allay'd, breed a Fever in the *whole*. When the Nourishment is ingrossed by any of the Joynts, tho' they may grow bulky, the Parts which feel its want, will gradually decay, and so the whole Body be extremely injur'd. As there are no Quarrels more hot and dangerous than those among *natural Brethren*; so there are no Jars or Contentions more fatal and destructive, than those among *civil ones*. The common Lot of those that *bite and devour one another*, is that cautioned against by St. *Paul*, *Gal.* 5. 15. to be *consumed one of another*. But when Peace and Union dwell in a Kingdom, they give Ease and Satisfaction to all that belong to it: Like Musick, they chear and enliven all within their Influences. *Behold how good and how pleasant it is, for Brethren to dwell together in Unity; like precious Ointment upon the Head*, it drops a Fragrancy on every *Skirt* in our *Garments*; or as *Dew* on the *Mountains*, it causes every Blade to spring and flourish, *Psal.* 133. This is as *Cement*, which keeps every

every Stone in the Building in its proper Place, and the whole Fabrick from falling asunder: It's not only the Beauty, but the Strength and Security of a Nation: When our Interests, Hearts, and Hands, are joyned, like a threefold Cord, we shall not be easily broken. It's therefore highly necessary to the Happiness of any People.

5thly. ANOTHER Thing necessary to a People's Happiness, is a wholsome Air, and strong healthy Constitutions.

HEALTH, this, like Salt, gives a Relish to all our other Comforts: Without this, the most charming Sounds, the noblest Sights, and the sweetest Draughts, are nauseous and offensive: Without this, the activest Spirits flag, the bravest Hero stoops, and the strongest Hand trembles. Sickness is like Poison to the human Nature; it either speedily destroys Persons, or renders them, during its Operation, dull and useless. Let a Disease enter the most flourishing and best order'd Family, what Confusion, what Distraction will it make? Let a raging Distemper spread thro' an Army, the stoutest Army, it will cool their *Courage*, weaken their *Powers*, and make them an easy Prey to those they would conquer. And the same Effects has Sickness in a Country or Kingdom; it will soon humble its *Pride* and stain its *Glory*. Tho' the Soil should be ever so productive, and its Fruit ever so delicious; if the Stomach should be weak, and Nature feeble, what would all signify? Tho' the People should be numerous as the Sands, would they not, like the *Shechemites*, *when sore*, be an easy Prey to such as should invade them? Or might not their own Diseases soon lessen their Numbers, and weaken their feeble Force? But when a People have a pure and free Air, robust and manly Constitutions; they can taste the Sweets of their Country, they can bear the Influence of different Seasons; they will multiply and increase; *their Quiver will be full of Arrows, they will not be ashamed, but be able to speak with the Enemy in the Gate.* This therefore is necessary to make them happy.

6thly. ANOTHER Thing required, is Plenty of all necessary Provisions.

'TIS not present Strength or Number that can secure or save a People: These, without some necessary Supports, will quickly lose all their Glory and Fervour. Let a *besieged Town* be ever so strongly fortified, or vigorously defended; if Ammunition and Provisions fail, it must soon *beat a Surrender:* Let a People be ever so spreading at present, if necessary Nourishment is denied, as in a Tree, the Leaves will drop off, and the Branches wither: But if Plenty in numerous Heaps appear in a *Kingdom*; if Trade and Commerce flourish, and Money, the Blood of the *Body Politick*, circulates briskly, it will put on a good Face, be filled with Courage, be able, like some little active Men, to contend with those that in Bulk far exceed it: This will give ease to the *Subject*, and Satisfaction and Glory to the Sovereign: 'Twill fit the Footstool to support the *Throne*, and the Throne the better to defend the *Footstool:* This will purchase the Assistance of *Neighbours*, gain the Credit and Esteem of *Foreigners*, incourage Industry, increase Inhabitants; like Money at Use, 'twill yearly augment the Riches, and add to the Stores of a Nation; and therefore must be necessary to give Happiness.

7thly and lastly. ANOTHER Requisite to the *Happiness of a People*, is Safety from Enemies at home, and Success and Victory over them abroad.

THERE's scarce a People (how inoffensive soever) that can be so happy as to be free from the Insults of all around them. War was the Lot of *God's ancient Heritage*, so 'tis frequently of his present *Church*. The wild *Beasts of the Forrest*, if not opposed, will break in and tread down the *Vineyard* of the *Lord*. Kingdoms, like Beasts or Fishes to one another, if not on their Guard, may be made the Prey of other Kingdoms. A lawful War is sometimes to be preferr'd to Peace and Quiet; and when 'tis ingaged in, scarce any thing will affect the People more than the Success of it.

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IF Armies and Navies, the Strength and Bulwark of a Kingdom, are routed and confounded, it must yield itself to be rifled, enslaved, or destroyed; or if it should be able to recruit and repair again, it must weaken one part or other. If Men, which are as the Spirits of a Nation, are drawn forth into the Field, the Heart will soon feel them wanting, and grow cold and languid. Tho' a Man after several Bleedings may retain his Courage and Chearfulness; yet he has lost much Strength, and after a few more, must complain. Tho' a People by a Lash or two, may only be the more roused and quickened; yet after a few good Beatings, they will be humbled, if not quite disabled. The Reverse of this therefore, Success and Victory, is necessary to make them happy.

II. I AM next to shew how we may obtain or prolong these Blessings, which are necessary to make us a happy People.

IN the general, we should strive for the Presence and Assistance of God with us, and be exact and regular in our Carriage to each other.

1st. If we would be a happy People, we must strive for the Presence and Assistance of God with us.

THIS is that *Fountain* whence all our Streams of national as well as private Comfort *flow:* This is the *glorious Sun* that must make our Country thrive and flourish, *and blessed, thrice blessed is the Nation whose God is the Lord, Psal.* 33. 12. Or in the Words following my Text, *Happy is that People whose God is the Lord.* None can vanquish us when in Alliance with him, or conquer when he is our Second. Let us therefore chiefly endeavour to get him on our side: Let us do any thing that may gain us his Favour and Aid; particularly let us perform these three things which are necessary thereto.

1. HUMBLE our selves for our past Sins.

2. CAREFULLY observe his Statutes and Ordinances for the future.

3. AND often earnestly intreat his Presence and Blessing.

1. IF we would gain God's Presence and Assistance, let us humble our selves for our past Sins.

THO' we have many excellent Laws to check and restrain Sin; tho' we have a *Queen*, who strives by Example and Proclamation to put them in execution; tho' the *Light of the Gospel* shines upon us with a more than common Brightness; yet when! alass! when was Vice more rampant than in our Days? Among the many that cry *Lord, Lord*, how few, how very few, are there that *do the Will of our Father which is in Heaven?* Where, O! where is that Zeal for *God!* that Concern for *Religion!* that Care of *Life* and *Conversation!* that was once found, and that ought to be in all the Professors of *Christianity?* Godliness is almost grown out of fashion, and Prophaneness by too many thought handsome and modish. *Ah sinful Nation, a People laden with Iniquity, a Seed of evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters: We have forsaken the Lord, we have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto Anger, we are gone away backward, Isa.* 1. 4. How long has Pride rid triumphant in our Streets? How many are there that toss the sacred Name of *God* on their impious Tongues, on every or no Occasion? How common is it to see the Drunkard lie wallowing with the Swine in his Filth and Nastiness? What a general Contempt is there of sacred Things? How have the great *Mysteries* of our Religion been ridicul'd and bantered, and all the Means of Grace slighted and despised? What a Spirit of Malice and Envy has there been lately discovered amongst us? What Mobs and Tumults have there been rais'd by those who pretend not to resist or dis-

disobey? What Cruelty, what Bloodshed has there been committed by such as would be thought the most peaceable Subjects in the World? How eager have we been to pull down each others Houses, dash out each others Brains? Is this agreeable to the Example of a meek *Jesus*, the Practice of the primitive *Christians*, or the Rules of the *Gospel of Peace?* Is this acting like Men, like Country-Men, like Neighbours and Brethren? Could Bears or Wolves do worse? *And will not the Lord visit us for these things? Shall not his Soul be aveng'd on such a Nation as this?* Jer. 5. 9. *He is a Holy God, he will by no means clear the Guilty*, Exod. 34. 7. *Or look on Iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13. *The Nation and Kingdom that will not serve him, shall perish, yea, those Nations shall be utterly wasted?* Isa. 60. 12. Therefore while we continue in our Sins, can we reasonably expect *God*'s Presence and Blessing? Surely no: But if we will humble our selves, and heartily repent, we confidently may. Our *Father* is willing to receive and embrace returning relenting Prodigals. When *Ephraim* began to *bemoan himself*, when he *turned* and *repented*, when he was *instructed* and *smote on his Thigh*, when he was *ashamed, yea, even confounded, because he did bear the Reproach of his Youth*; hear how God commiserates him: *Is* Ephraim *my dear Son? Is he a pleasant Child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: Therefore my Bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have Mercy upon him*, Jer. 31. 18, 19, 20. *And at whatsoever Instant God shall speak concerning a Nation, or concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that Nation against whom he has pronounced, turn from their Evil, he will repent of the Evil that he thought to do unto them*, Jer. 18. 7, 8. As vile and provoking therefore as we have been, if we will humble our selves, we may hope that God will yet mercifully regard us. O come then! let us sink, sink into the very Dust, before our *God*; let a shameful Blush now cover our Faces; let the Thought of what we have done, what we have deserved, strike us deep; *Let Rivers*

s in good Government, and a due ...
cy, Peace and Union, as well as Health and Plenty, y and Victory; and these depend much on our own pers and Behaviour. Let's not then be wanting to elves, let's not wilfully withstand our Common d, but with one Consent observe whatever is necessto the Prosperity of our beloved Country, particuy these three things which are evidently of that mber.

1. CONFINE our selves to the Business of our rticular Stations.
2. BANISH all Malice and Hatred, and embrace ich other with a hearty Affection.
3. AND do good to all according to our Capacity.

1. Let us confine our selves to the Business of our parcular Stations.

THO' we are all fixed in the same *Firmament*, yet e have different *Spheres*, some higher and some lower) move in; the Body Politick as well as the Body Naıral has different Members, and each Member is assignl its particular Office, and ought to keep to it: ıould the shining Orbs above grow eccentrical in their lotions, they'd spoil the Beauty and break the Harmony the Universe, and dash against and destroy each other: ıould the Members of the Body usurp each others Ofce; should the Ear pretend to see, and the Eyes to ear; should we strive to walk on our Hands or Head, contrive and work with our Feet, would not the ght be monstrous, the Pain great, the Loss very conierable? So in the *Body Politick*: Should untemper'd *eal*, foolish *Curiosity*, or *Pride* and *Ambition* put Men on ch Undertakings as they were never qualify'd for, or lled to by Providence; instead of serving the Interest, ıey'd indanger the Safety, and interrupt the Happiness the whole Society. Of the Truth of this, we have o notorious an Instance fresh in our Memories: By what

what were the late Riots and Tumults, and all the unparalelled Violences and Confusions of the last Year occasion'd, but a *fiery Zealots* medling out of his proper Business? As we value therefore the prosperity of our Country, let us for the future keep within our respective Stations; let us leave the Government to those that are to Govern; silently and contentedly permit the *Queen* to choose her own *Ministers*, and the *Parliament* our Representatives, to Enact such Laws as they judge most for our Security and Advantage: Let's not ramble out of our Way, and justle and disturb others, but let each of us content himself in the Place God has put him; and without further concern, quietly, honestly and industriously follow that Work God has set him, which is the best way of advantaging the Publick, and the only safe Course to promote the Common Welfare.

2. LET us banish all Malice and Hatred, and embrace each other with a hearty Affection.

WHAT can be more painful or dangerous to a Body, to a Houshold, to any Society, than to have one Member disregarding or offending the other? But what Beauty and Advantage is there in Love and Peace in Families or Kingdoms? *If we live in Peace, the God of Love and Peace shall be with us*, 2 Cor. 13. 11. *If we dwell together in Unity, the Lord will command his Blessing on us, even Life for evermore*, Psal. 133. Let us therefore now purge all Malice and Envy out of our Breasts, and cast all Names and Titles of Distinction out of our Mouths. 'Tis true, we differ in our *Opinions* in some things; but should we therefore divide in *Affection*? Has not there been different Perswasions among the wisest and best Men of all Ages? Have I any more Reason to quarrel with another for his particular Sentiment, after his best Endeavours to inform himself, than he hath with me for mine? Has he not a Right, is he not commanded to judge for himself? Is he not bound to observe the Dictate of his own Conscience? And does he not sin; and shall he not answer for it to a more awful Bar if he does

 not?

not? Han't we all different Capacities and different Improvements? Are we angry with one another for having different Complexions, different Features, and different Shapes? And is it not as little in our Power to fashion the Mind, as to mould the Body? Do we not agree in more Things than we differ? Are we not *one* mystical *Body? Have we not one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all, and thro' all, and in us all?* Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6. Have we not the same *Queen*, the same *Country*, the same *Laws*, and one common *Interest?* Does *God* make any Distinction upon the Account of Opinion? Has not *Christ* dy'd for all? Does not *God* shower his Mercies on all? Is there not much Learning, much Ingenuity, much Wealth and Riches among Men of every sober Perswasion? Shall we then envy and hate one another? No: Let us presently wash off the Remembrance of former Provocations: Let us forget the Violence and Injuries we have done, lately done each other. If there are any that will *cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which we preach, and ye have learned, I beseech you mark and avoid them,* Rom. 16. 17. *Recompence to no Man Evil for Evil: Be not overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good,* Rom. 12. 17, 21. With the primitive Christians, 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. *Being reviled, bless; being persecuted, suffer it; being defamed, intreat. If our Brother offend against us, let us forgive him, not only until seven times, but until seventy Times seven,* Mat. 18. 22. *As our Father in Heaven causes his Sun to shine, on the Evil and on the Good, sendeth Rain on the Just and Unjust; so let us love our Enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, pray for them that despitefully use us,* Mat. 5. 44. 45. Let us strive for that Christian Charity *which suffereth long, and is kind; envieth not, vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up, doth not behave it self unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no Evil, rejoyceth not in Iniquity, but rejoyceth in the Truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things,* 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 6, 7. Let us now consider

der our Relation, and *have the same Love, be of one Accord, of one Mind, and let nothing be done through Strife or vain Glory*, Phil. 2. 2, 3. *But Love without Dissimulation; be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly Love*, Rom. 12. 9. 10.

3. Lastly. LET us do good to all, according to our Capacity.

OUR Interests are so much of a piece, as that we must rise and fall together. Let us *not look therefore every Man on his own things, but every Man also on the things of others*, Phil. 2. 4. *As we have Opportunity, let us do good unto all Men, especially unto them who are of the Houshold of Faith*, Gal. 6 10. Let us not impale our Charity or Beneficence within any particular Party; but let our Favours, like *God's*, be scatter'd on Men of every Denomination: Let not our kind Offices be confin'd to Persons of any particular Rank or Quality: But as Members of the same Body, let us afford any, every part our Care and Help. As the Head does not overload us, but wisely project and contrive for our Welfare; so let us, the more *inferior Members*, cheerfully support and provide for her: Let not the most *Advanced*, think it too great a Condescension to regard the *Lowest*; the *Rich* think it inglorious to respect the most *Beggarly*: Let not the *Neglected* envy the *Favour'd*, the *Obscure* the *Famous*, the Little the Great; but let us willingly become Servants to all: *For even the Son of Man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister and to give his Life a Ransom for many*, Mark 10. 45.

III. I SHALL conclude with some suitable Reflections on the whole.

1st. HENCE we may learn what great Reason we of *Great Britain* have, to bless and praise the Lord.

HOW kind, how wonderfully kind, has *God* been to our Nation? We enjoy most, if not all the Blessings that are necessary to make us a happy People.

WE have an easy, moderate *Government*; our Lives and Properties don't depend on the Will and Pleasure of an absolute *Prince*; we are not subject to the wild Passions, or heavy Frailties of a furious, uncontrollable Monarch; we have not sold our selves as perpetual Slaves to Tyranny; notwithstanding the Arguments from the *old Theocracy*, or *supposed Hierarchy* above, our Government has its due Bounds and Limits: All the Inhabitants of *Britain* are circumscribed by Law; and that not such Cobweb ones, as serve only for lesser Flies, but such as will take hold of the greatest. 'We live under a 'Government well ballanced and steadily managed; 'where Justice and Mercy meet together, and temper 'one another; where the Poorest is not afraid to com-'plain, and the Greatest are not above the Reach of Ju-'stice; where the Course of Law is free, and the pro-'per Places for Redress are well known', as the Bishop of *Sarum* * expresses it. All Power is not lodg'd in the hand of one Person: Tho' the *Executive* rightfully belongs to the *Sovereign*, yet the *Legislative* is shared between her and the *Subject*: There are *Lords* and *Commons* to vote as well as a *King* or *Queen*; and a *King* or *Queen* to over-rule *Lords* and *Commons*: There can be no Burden thrown on our Backs, but what was of our own binding: We can't be miserable, unless our *Representatives* vote us so: And as our Government is recommended by its just and *equal Mixture*, so is it by its *prime Manager*: As our Scepter is graced by its own proper Length and Bigness, so is it by the Hand that sways it.

AS to Religion, while the greatest part of the World have nothing but the *dark Light* of Nature, or the *Ignis fatuus* of a pretending Prophet, the *Sun* of the *Gospel* is risen upon us, and has comfortably enlightned our Path to Glory; While many who stile themselves *Christian Churches*,

* *In his Sermon preach'd before the* Queen, *and the two Houses of Parliament*, Dec. 31st, 1706. Page 6.

Churches, are clouded with *Superstition* and *Idolatry*, we (blessed be God) have felt a Reformation; and *Britain* may be said, without boasting, to be as remarkable for Religion, as any Place in all *Europe*.

OUR *Liberty of Conscience* has hitherto been granted, and its Continuance is graciously promised: They who account Religion in a plain Dress most acceptable, are not obliged to take in any unnecessary Fringe or Ornament. If we have the *Substance*, the want of a particular *Form of Christianity* can't be accounted criminal. There being no Difference in *Doctrine*, and but little in *Opinion*, you are allowed to choose for your Pastor, either a *Bishop* or *Presbyter*, and to worship in either *Church* or *Meeting-house*: And what can be more advantageous than such a *Toleration*? The *Clergy* are abridg'd of no Priviledges, nor the Ecclesiastical Constitution in the least indanger'd by it, and *Dissenters* are easy and contented; for however they may be represented by some, the Generality of them look on the *Church of England* as a noble part of the *Reformation*; freely acknowledge, that as there have been, so there are at present, many shining Lights in this *Golden Candle-stick*; heartily pray, that by their kind Influences they may guide many safe to Heaven; and are so far from envying the Glory of the *Mitre*, or coveting any of the Honours and Preferments that are deny'd them, as that they desire nothing more than the Love of their more happy Brethren, the Favour and Blessing of their God, and a constant Freedom to serve him according to their own Sentiment and Capacity.

IN Regard of Peace and Union, it must be acknowledg'd, That there are too many hot Heads, too many fiery Spirits yet amongst us: But here let me draw a Veil, let me not trouble you with the dismal, dismal Prospect of your own bleeding Country; but rather incourage you by these Thoughts, That *he that stilleth the Noise of the Seas, the Noise of their Waves*, can also the *Tumult of the People*, Psal. 65. 7. That he that composed a shining

Globe

Globe of fiery Particles, can unite Men of the most active and furious Tempers; and that our Interests, if not Affections, joyn. *England* and *Scotland* (as *Ephraim* and *Judah* some time did) make one *Nation in the Land, and one King is King to them all, and they shall be no more two Nations, neither shall they be divided into two Kingdoms any more at all.*

OUR Air is admirably temper'd, and as the *Bishop* of *Sarum* * remarks, has had no Pestilential Infection for half an Age: Our Constitutions are strong, fitted for the hardships of War, and the Toil of any Domestick Trade or Business.

OUR Soil is fertile, tho' we are separated, as by a vast Dike, from the rest of the Habitable World; we need none of their Commodities to enrich or supply us; we contain within our own Bounds whatsoever is necessary to Relief or Pleasure: Our Seas and Rivers are ploughed by shoals of Fish; our Air is cut by the choicest of all the Feather'd Kind; our Ground yields such a plenty of all Fruits, and especially Corn, as *that it was truly said by one of the Ancients* (to use the Words of Dr. *Edwards* †) *that here was the spacious Palace of* Ceres, and to compleat our Happiness, we have been favour'd with Victory also. That Usurping Tyrant, who heretofore aw'd the Neigbouring Nations, has had his *Pride* humbled, and *Rage* bounded by *Britains* prosperous Arms; he who had rob'd the *Divinity* of that honour which was his sole Prerogative, has seen his Glory trampled on by a Female Foot; he who could formerly boast of Conquest, and triumph in Success, has been forced to yield to our superiour Courage, and fly before our braver Troops. O what great Grace, what astonishing Mercy is this to our

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* *In his Sermon preach'd in the Cathedral Church of* Salisbury, *Nov. 5th*, 1710. Page 5.

† *In his Sermon preach'd before the University of* Cambridge, *Nov. 5th*, 1709. Page 24.

our unworthy *Island*! Shall not our Souls now *bless the Lord and all that is within us, bless his Holy Name*; shall not our Souls *bless the Lord and forget not all his Benefits?* Since he thus *healeth our Diseases, makes his Ways and Acts known* unto our *Israel*; *satisfieth our Mouths with Goodness, redeemeth our Lives from Destruction, crowneth us with loving Kindness, and tender Mercies?* Ps. 103. 1st. pt.

2. HENCE we may learn what an invaluable Mercy we had in the late happy *Revolution*.

MOST of those Blessings which are necessary to our Happiness, were brought us by this favourable Turn. Had things run in the Channel they were just before fallen into, according to best Conjecture, this *Island* had never known these prosperous Days. Instead of the True and unmixed *Religion*, *Popery* and *Superstition* would have been planted and defended: Instead of our agreeable Constitution, *Tyranny* would have forced its Yoke on our Necks; instead of a gracious Protestant *Queen*, whose Life may the bountiful Giver long, very long preserve, that *Popish Pretender*, we now abjure, and have lately repelled, would have been settled on our Throne. Those Sacred and Civil Liberties we now enjoy, must have given Place to Bondage and Slavery. Instead of confining the *Tyrant* of *France*, or defeating his Bloody Attempts, we must have been Tools to further his base Designs; but blessed be God, he saw our foreboding Miseries and sent us a Deliverer, *WILLIAM! WILLIAM!* Whose very Name's beloved by all true *English-Men*, and will be famous to latest Posterity. Brave *WILLIAM!* was sent by Heaven to prevent our Ruin; he came and freed an Oppressed People, recover'd our Expiring Priviledges, open'd a Passage for *ANNE*, Great *ANNE*, who now Gloriously succeeds him on our Throne. O what a kind, what an admirable Providence was this.

3. Lastly, HENCE let's be all perswaded carefully to govern our Tempers and Actions.

OUR

OUR National Happiness flows at present comparatively very far, but let's remember that this *high-Tide* like that of the Sea, is owing to the *Heavenly Influences* and our *regular Motions*, and may soon Ebb. Should we by our Sins provoke the keeper of our *Israel*; should we by our Heats and Feuds embroil the Nation, our bright Day would quickly be o'erclouded: Let's therefore watch over our selves, let's maintain a Christian frame within, and set an Exemplary Conversation without; let's *fear God and the Queen, and meddle not with them that are given to Change*, Prov. 24. 21. *Let's lead quiet and peaceable Lives, in all Godliness and Honesty*, for this will be Safe and Comfortable to our selves, *and good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour*. To whom be Glory for ever and ever *Amen*.

FINIS.

The Reader is desired to correct the following Errata.

PAge 4. Line 34. for *possest* read *possess*. p. 10. l. 5. for *Fervour* read *Terrour*. l. 24. for *give* read *its*. p. 12. l. 25. for *triumphant* read *triumphantly*. p. 13. l. 4. add *and*. p. 15. l. 1. for *prise* read *prize*. l. 25. for *got* read *go*.

practical Christianity the true Orthodoxy: Or, *A wicked Life the worst Heresy.*

A

SERMON

Preached at

EXON,

September the 8th, 1731.

Before an

Assembly of MINISTERS.

By *WILLIAM NATION.*

The Righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour.
Solomon.

Published at the Request of several worthy Members.

LONDON:

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THE PREFACE

HE following Discourse was compos'd with a Design to revive practical *Christianity, which is every where too visibly in a declining State; and in order to this, to prevent all uncharitable Disputes, and unchristian Contentions, which have certainly been one great Cause that practical Christianity is at so low an Ebb as it is. That the Discourse might not miss of its End, the Author (though he*

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he was for treating Things which deserved it with a just Severity) would no way meddle with personal Reflections; all Care was taken to guard his Discourse. Accordingly, after it was finished, because he would not trust wholly to his own Judgment, he had the Opinion of other very capable and impartial Persons, as to some particular Sentences which might be so censured. Their Sentiments were, that there was no Foundation for such a Censure. Indeed, as to the Discourse itself, no Man ever saw it till it was preached. When it was preached, in the Afternoon it being moved to give Thanks, as usual, several Objections were made. One, as I remember, was, that I had spoke against all Controversies *as* Metaphysical: *But this 'tis evident I had not; and what I had chiefly spoken against with respect to Controversies in general, was, the* unchristian *and* scandalous *Management of them. Another Objection was, that it was a Sermon of* Works without Faith. *What such Persons mean by Faith is best known to themselves; but*

but certainly that Man must be exceeding weak, who shall attempt to prove, that the practical Christianity *I had been treating on, and indeed which runs through the Discourse, can possibly be without the Faith of the Gospel. Besides, the Reader will find such Expressions as these, that* Faith is a vital Principle of Holiness, the great Foundation of, and Encouragement to it; *that* Holiness of Heart and Life, founded on Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, is the sure, the only Way to Heaven; *with other Expressions to the same Purpose. The Reader will find also the several Doctrines of the Gospel treated on, and 'tis much if these should contain nothing of the Faith of the Gospel. But the great Objection was, that the Sermon was full of* Reflections: *Not one Instance was produced; a calm Debate was offered as to any thing that should be objected; and this not only by the Author, but by* several *of the* Brethren: *No such thing could be admitted: No, the* easiest *the* surest, (*for the Opponents*

ly it is faithfully done. All I shall add is, that as I had no ill Design in preaching the Discourse, so neither have I in publishing it; and hope by the Blessing of God it will be serviceable to the End for which it was intended, even the Promoting Purity, Peace, and Love.

TIT.

TIT. ii. 11, 12.

For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all Men; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.

IT has been my great Endeavour, in the general Course of my Ministry, to promote *practical* Christianity. I am sensible, if I secure this, I secure every Thing, the Glory of God, the Credit of Religion, the eternal Happiness of my People, my own Comfort: But if I miss of this, I do nothing. And whoever has a just Sense of Things, if he has no Prospect of doing Good this way, he will be for any Employment, rather than that of a Minister, especially in the Dissenting Way.

As for Controversy, I will not say I have never dealt in it; but I will very freely own, then have I been *warmest* when I knew *least*; which I take to be a common Case. The more I have studied, and read, and been acquainted with the World, the more sensible have I been, that the Path to Heaven lies not here; for if so, the common People can never hope to go thither; and, indeed, but few of the Learned, especially if they are to be judged according to their Judgment one of another. I have been convinced, that the Differences among Christians are not so great, as commonly represented; that some of them are about Matters *circumstantial*; others, if rightly understood, and traced up to their proper Head, are really in Points *metaphysical*, and are such Things, as Men, however warm they may be, know little of, and in which Persons may differ, and be equally sincere.

I am satisfied, that were there more Humility, more impartial Searches after Truth, more Love to God and Men, more of a truly Christian Zeal, there would be less Controversy; and that which is, would be managed with Meekness and Peace. But Ignorance, Laziness, Pride, Envy, Bigottry, Uncharitableness, too usually come in the room of the excellent Things before mentioned; and so the Church has been the Stage of War, and the Seat of Division.

I am fully perſuaded, that Diſputes, as they are commonly handled, are a Scandal to Chriſtianity, and the greateſt Hindrance to Perſons being converted to it. As it was a ſpecial Command of Jeſus, that his Diſciples ſhould love one another, ſo certainly he knew how much their practiſing it would recommend his Religion, and of what fatal Conſequence it would be to have them biting and devouring one another. And, indeed, there never was, and, I fear, never will be, an Age of *diſputing*, but vital *Godlineſs* has viſibly declin'd, and been even loſt in the Scuffle.

May all of us, my Brethren, who are Miniſters of the Goſpel, avoid this Rock, and it will be moſt for our Comfort, and give us the moſt rational Hope of a Crown of Life. May we, when our great Lord and Maſter calls for us, be found turning Men from the *Evil* of their *Ways*, promoting Purity, Peace, and Love, and not be found beating our Fellow Servants, or ſetting Chriſtians at Variance one with another.

By the Words of the Text, you may eaſily ſee my Diſcourſe will be of a *practical* Nature, to ſet before you the great *Deſign* of *Chriſtianity*, that we may anſwer it our ſelves, and promote it in others, according to our Abilities and Opportunities, and the Relations of Life we are in.

The Grace of God teacheth us.

That by the *Grace of God* is meant the

Gospel Dispensation, is very evident from the Context. *Titus* isexhorted to put Persons in Mind of several Duties, that they might *adorn the Doctrine of God their Saviour in all Things*; it follows, *For the Grace of God that brought Salvation*, &c.

The Gospel Dispensation is the *Grace of God*, as 'tis the Fruit of divine *Goodness*, a Revelation the World much wanted; as 'tis a Discovery of God's great Love in Jesus Christ to a lost World. This Grace has appeared to *all Men*, Men of all *Ranks* and *Degrees*, Men of all *Nations*, *Kindreds*, and *Tongues*; and what it most clearly taught was, that Men should *deny Ungodliness*, &c.

I shall discourse from the Words in the following Method.

I. Explain what is meant by *denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, living soberly, righteously, and godly.*

II. Shew how evidently the Gospel Dispensation *teaches all Men* so to do; and then make Application.

I. I am to explain what is meant by *denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, living soberly, righteously, and godly.*

By *denying Ungodliness:* Ungodliness has Regard to *Worship*, and the common *Conversation.* As to Worship, Ungodliness, in the grossest

groſſeſt Senſe, is the living without any religious Worſhip at all: But this is what neither *Jew*, nor *Gentile*, at our Saviour's Coming, were chargeable with; and, indeed, ſome religious Worſhip or other has been ever univerſal. Among thoſe Nations that have been ignorant and moſt depraved, there has been ſome Worſhip, ſome religious Rites. The Learned have ſought over the Face of the Earth to find out a People that have lived entirely like the Beaſts, without any religious Worſhip; but 'tis a Queſtion, after all, whether they have found *any*; or if they have, 'tis a very *inconſiderable* Number.

As 'tis Ungodlineſs to live without *any* religious Worſhip *at all*, ſo 'tis to live without it in *great Meaſure*. Religious Worſhip is not a Thing to be paid juſt once a Week; no, the Duties of it return *every Day*: There are daily Mercies Men are to be thankful for, daily Wants they are to pray to have ſupply'd. Even among Chriſtians there is much Ungodlineſs. Heathens had their Houſhold-Gods they paid Homage to; but many *called* Chriſtians pay no Homage in their Houſes to any God at all. 'Tis amazing any ſhould be *called Chriſtians*, who live without *daily* Prayer, though there are too many ſuch Inſtances. But there are three Things, I take it, here meant by Ungodlineſs, as regarding *Worſhip*, and which Perſons are to abſtain from, *Idolatry*, *Superſtition*, *falſe Worſhip*.

Idolatry.

Idolatry. This was the *eſtabliſhed* Religion of the *Gentile* World, and *univerſally* prevail'd among them. 'Twas alſo what the *Jews*, God's own People, often fell into; as ſacred Hiſtory fully informs us.

Now *Idolatry* is *twofold*; a paying religious Worſhip to *falſe* Gods, and a worſhipping the *true* God *by Images*: The former is evidently againſt the firſt Commandment; the latter, againſt the ſecond. Both theſe ſorts of Idolatry were practiſed by the *Gentile* World.

As the common People bowed down to Stocks and Stones, to Things their own Hands had form'd; ſo 'tis evident, as to the Bulk of them, their Worſhip *terminated* in theſe their *Idols*, or at moſt in ſome *petty* Deities they imagined reſided in them: they were ſo ſunk, that they had *no* manner of *Notion* of the *true God, who made Heaven and Earth.*

Tho' the *Philoſophers generally* gave into *Idolatry*, yet, as they had ſome Knowledge of the *true* God, and reaſon'd ſometimes very *finely* about him, ſo 'tis not to be imagined they could make Gods of *Stocks* and *Stones*; neither did they: No, they worſhipped the *true* God *by Images.* Their giving into Idolatry ſhewed that, notwithſtanding their fine Reaſoning, their Notions of God were very *imperfect*, and far from being firm and ſettled, that they could bow down to Things ſo unlike him. Or certainly it ſhewed their

Notions

Notions of *another World* were very *imperfect*, and their Belief of it was very *unsettled*; otherwise they had not so wanted Courage to oppose Idolatry; they had not, for fear of the Fury of the Populace, or to gain their Favour, to serve some politick Ends, or selfish Designs, given into Idolatry, and so established the common People in it by their own Example.

As the *Gentile* World were guilty of the Idolatry of worshipping *false* Gods, and that of worshipping the *true* God by *Images*; so the *Jews* very often fell into the *latter*. It can't be thought that they, who had so *clear* a *Revelation* of the true God, and had *seen his Wonders*, should be so sunk as to worship *Stocks* and *Stones* for Gods; or at least if any did, they must be very *few*, whom we can imagine so depraved. No, they often fell into *Idolatry*, yet, in bowing down to *Idols*, they had *some* Regard to the *true* God, and in him their Worship chiefly *terminated*.

Any Person might easily see there is a considerable Difference between these two sorts of Idolatry, the worshipping *false* Gods, and the worshipping the *true* God *by Images*; the former implies even a *Denial* of the one *true* God, and robs him of *all* Worship; the latter owns his *Being*, and gives the *chief* Homage to him; the *Body* bows down to the *Idol*, and the *Soul* pays Homage to *God*: 'Tis, indeed, a debasing the Almighty, to make

make him like to Stocks and Stones, or to worship him under any Shape whatever. Even the latter sort of Idolatry, worshipping the *true* God *by Images*, was *inexcusable* in the *Jews*, who had a divine Revelation, whereby they might have had clear and settled Notions of God, and the Worship to be paid him, and whereby all Idolatry was expresly forbidden; much more inexcusable is it in Christians.

But that it was altogether *inexcusable* in *Heathens*, I will not say: I think learned Men have not yet proved it, and, I believe, never will prove it, but this Idolatry may consist with Sincerity, and God will make Allowances for it. Those who have condemned all the *Heathen Philosophers* as wicked, and cast them out of Favour with God, on the Account of their *Idolatry*, either have forgot the *Distinction* of Idolatry into that of worshipping *false* Gods, and that of worshipping the *true* God *by Images*; or have been so severe against them for the latter, on the account of the severe Things said in Scripture against *such Idolaters*, not considering that those Things are spoken *against such as have a divine Revelation*, and can't be certainly construed to have Regard to those who have no Revelation at all. All that I shall add here is, that, for my Part, I can much better make Allowances for *Heathens* guilty of *this Idolatry*, than I can for Persons

under the Old Teſtament having *ſo many Wives and Concubines*, or half Wives, as they had; yet that this was conſiſtent with *Sincerity*, none will diſpute.

There is no need I ſhould any farther enlarge on this Head of *Idolatry*, as we live in a *Proteſtant* Land, where *all* do profeſſedly worſhip the *one true God, through the one Mediator*, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and ſo can't be charged with *either* ſort of the Idolatry I have been treating on.

I am not ignorant that Proteſtants ſay very hard Things one of another; but, for my Part, I am not of ſo nice a Diſcerning, as to be able certainly to prove this Charge of *Idolatry* on any, from what I know of their *private* Schemes; and if I can't be certain herein, how can I anſwer for the Thing it ſelf in the Conſequences of it, ſhould I bring ſuch a Charge? And as I have obſerved what the general Profeſſion of Proteſtants is, ſo if there be ſuch whoſe Hearts contradict their Profeſſion, as I can't know it, I am not to *judge* them, but to leave them to him, who will be *their* Judge and *mine*.

Another Thing meant by *Ungodlineſs*, and which we are to abſtain from, is *Superſtition*. This alſo is *twofold*; one regarding religious Rites of *human* Invention and Appointment; the other regarding Rites and Ordinances of *divine* Appointment. There may be Su-

perſtition in the latter as well as in the former.

1. Superſtition in religious Rites of *human* Invention and Appointment, lies in *placing Religion in ſuch Rites*, ſuch external Forms and outward Obſervances; being very zealous for them, and yet very negligent about thoſe holy Diſpoſitions, and that holy Converſation, which become all God's Worſhippers.

Is it not ſtrange Men ſhould venture to make Additions of their own to the Worſhip of God? Is it not a Thing expreſly forbidden? Did not our Saviour charge it as a very *criminal* Thing on the Scribes and Phariſees, that they *taught for Doctrines the Commandments of Men?* Can it be thought our Saviour, at the ſame Time he aboliſhed the *Jewiſh ceremonial* Law, which was of *divine* Inſtitution, would give Men Liberty to make another of *their own?* Will Men act as if *God* did not know what Rites were neceſſary and uſeful? Or will they not let him be King in his own Kingdom, but take it on them to make Laws, and enjoin the Obſervance of them? Will Men have ſuch trifling Apprehenſions of the ſupreme Being, as that there muſt be Rites, or any Rites they pleaſe of their own Invention? Is it not certain, Man may invent *endleſsly* if they are not reſtrained by Authority; that the common People have always made an ill Uſe of human

Rites, idoliz'd them, and placed Religion in them, have hated others for not joining with them in these Observances; and that these human Rites have been ever Bones of Contention? 'Tis true, Men have made an ill Use of *divine* Rites; but this is no Reason there should be none such, or that they should be observ'd no more; though 'tis with Respect to *Mens*, as might be easily shewn, had I Time.

As 'tis strange Men should *make* religious Rites, so 'tis that Men should *place Religion* in them, as if God was pleased with them, and they should hereby make Atonement for their Sins, and obtain Favour with God. What *mean* Notions must such have of the *supreme* Being? What a light and passionate Being must they suppose him? There is too much of *this Superstition* among *Protestants.*

2. There is *Superstition* with Respect to Rites and Ordinances of *divine* Appointment; when Men rest in them, are careful about the *outward* Observance, but use them not as Means to cultivate and improve *Virtue*, and to be better in their Hearts and Lives. These Persons Religion is as truly Superstition as theirs, who are zealous for *human* Rites. Do not these Persons conceive of God as an *arbitrary* Being, commanding Things for mere *Will* and *Pleasure*, which is a very debasing Conception of him? Do not they make him

to be a light and passionate Being, one pleas'd with *Trifles* without regarding the *inward* Dispositions of his People, whether they are good and holy or not? Which is the very Essence of Superstition. Of this latter Sort of Superstition, are not *Protestant Dissenters* too guilty? Are there not many that *place Religion* in *hearing*, in praying, in Sacraments, in fasting; that *rest* in these Things, and hope to find Favour with God on the Account of them, when they are careless of their Hearts and Lives? My Brethren in the Ministry, have we not Reason to fear there are too many such in our several Congregations? Are we warm in charging Superstition on our Brethren of the Church of *England*; have we none of it among *ourselves?* Would to God we had none.

The last Thing meant by *Ungodliness* with Regard to worship, and which we are to abstain from, is, *false Worship:* Of which are guilty all Persons worshipping God without any Fear of him, or Love to him, or sincere Subjection to his Government; Persons making Religion a Cloke for their Iniquity, and a Cover for their Hypocrisy, like the Pharisees who *devour'd Widows Houses, and for a Pretence made long Prayers*; like the *Israelites* of old who fasted *for Strife and Debate, and to smite with the fist of Wickedness*, Isai. lviii. 4. Many *Heathens* had very *impure* Notions of their Gods, and ascribed to them even all Man-

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per of *Lusts* and *Vices*: And such were the Services they paid them; 'twas a *shame to speak of those Things which were done of them in secret*, Ephes. v. 12. And what Notions have many of God, who call themselves *Christians*, if we may judge by their Lives? Is not all Manner of Sin and Iniquity practis'd in the midst of us?

Ungodliness as to the *common Conversation* lies in living without any *Fear* of God, any Acknowledgment of him, denying his Being or Providence; in speaking loosely, and profanely, and irreverently of God, his Word, and Ordinances; in vain Swearing and Cursing; in Perjury; in Impatience and Murmuring. Do not these Sins abound in our Land?

As we are to deny *Ungodliness*, so we are to deny *worldly Lusts*; inordinate Desires after the *Things* of this World, which make Men proud, ambitious, envious, imperious, given to Strife and Contention; after the *Riches* of this World, which make Men earthly minded, covetous, unjust, oppressive; after the *Pleasures* of this World, which make Men Sensualists, to revel it in lawful Pleasures, or to give in to such as are *unlawful*, Rioting and Drunkenness, Chambering and Wantonness: We are to abstain from the Lusts too commonly gratified, the Pollutions which are in the World by Lust.

Thus

Thus have I considered what we must abstain from, *viz. Ungodliness and worldly Lusts.* I come now to consider what our real Practice must be.

We must *live soberly.* We must walk with Humility, and Condescension: We must be very temperate as to Meats and Drinks: We must be chast, and pure; be meek, and peaceable, be loving, and forgiving; We must use the Delights and Enjoyments of this World with Moderation: We must maintain an Indifferency to earthly things; we must be contented in our Condition, be resign'd to God's Will, have our Conversation in Heaven, behave it as Probationers for Eternity, as Travellers to a better Country.

We must *live righteously*, or, as the Word is differently render'd, *justly* and *charitably.*

We must live *justly*, maintain Truth and Uprightness in our Words, and Promises, and in all our Actions; must be Men of Integrity, must not live or act in Disguise. A naked Simplicity must run through our whole Conduct: We must do as we would be done by: We must render to all their Dues.

We must live *charitably*, have a sincere Love for all Men; accordingly hope the best we can of them, rejoice in their Good, be sorry for any Evil that comes upon them, be very ready to forgive any Injuries they have done us, no Way to revenge them, and if they repent, to be entirely reconciled to them; be tender of their

good

good Name, be for promoting their good in Soul and Body, be feeding the hungry, relieving the distressed, informing the ignorant, reclaiming the obstinate, helping up him that is fallen. Charity is *Righteousness*, as 'tis doing what we *ought*, what is *fit* and equal, a doing as we would be done by.

We are to live *godly*, as those who believe a God, and a Providence, and a future State of Retribution; to worship God with those holy Dispositions of Soul that become his Worshippers thus to serve God in *his* House and our *own*, making Conscience of observing all God's Ordinances; to speak reverently of God, his Name, Attributes, Word and Ordinances; to acknowledge his Providence; to fear before him at all Times; in a becoming Manner to bear all his Chastisements; to promote his Glory, his Kingdom, in the World.

Thus have I explain'd what is meant by *denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, living soberly, righteously and godly.*

Every Part of our Duty, that to our Neighbour as well as to God and our selves, is to take Place, and one is not to shut out, or excuse us from the other; yea, one cannot be truly and faithfully discharged without the other. I come,

II. To shew how evidently the Gospel-Dispensation *teaches* Men to deny Ungodliness

ness and worldly Lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly. Nothing is more evident than that it is admirably calculated, and the whole Scope of it is, according as it was prophesied of, to turn Men from Darkness to Light, from Sin and Satan unto God; that it is come to give Men *just Notions* of Virtue and Goodness, and to persuade them, in the strongest Manner, to the Practice of it; that it is come to *subdue* Mens *Lusts*, their evil Tempers and Dispositions, and to make this Earth a Place of Purity, Peace and Love; that it is come to *ennoble* Mens *Natures*, to restore them to the *divine* Image; that the Way to Heaven, under the Gospel, is the Way of *Holiness*; and this so plain, that a *way-faring Man, though a Fool, shall not err therein*, Isai. xxxv. 8. And, indeed, it must be a Way for the *Simple*, as well as the *Wise*.

Our Saviour (which we may call an Introduction to his Religion) tells us, he was *not come to destoy the Law, but to fulfil* it, to establish what was of a *moral* Nature under the Old Testament, to make it more clear and full by explaining it, and giving more and higher Instances of moral Duties, than were before expresly given; and, indeed, 'twas impossible but he should do this, as he brought a Revelation from *Heaven*. What was in its Nature *good*, and of eternal Obligation must still stand, and a Prophet sent of God

God must confirm it, give Men greater Motives, and lay them under stronger Obligations to be conformed to it. Had our Saviour destroy'd the *moral* Law, he had thereby proved himself an Impostor. So that whatever of a *moral* Nature there is under the Old Testament, it is by Christ a Part of the Gospel Law: It is binding on us Christians, not because it was given to the *Jews* by *Moses* and the Prophets; for if so, then the Ceremonial Law is binding, as well as the Moral: But 'tis obliging, as 'tis the Law of *Nature*, as Christ hath confirmed it by his Authority; and farther, as 'tis the Matter of a *divine* Revelation, which Christians have the Benefit of.

As to the *moral* Law, the two great Precepts of it are, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and Mind, and Strength; and thy Neighbour as thy self.* These two Precepts *contain* the whole of our Duty, and, if *attended* to, will *teach* us the whole of it. If we love God, we shall worship him in the best manner we can, and abstain from all Idolatry and Superstition; we shall fear before him, speak honourably of him, promote his Glory, deny our selves to please him. If we love our Neighbour as our selves, we shall desire his Good in Soul and Body, and be for promoting it. These two excellent Precepts would cure us of all Irreligion, Loosenes, Profaneness, of all Luke-warmness; of

Pride, Passion, Intemperance, Sensuality, worldly Mindedness, Discontent; of all Hatred, Malice, Revenge, Injustice. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law:* You may see its Comprehensiveness as to our Neighbour, 1 *Cor.* xiii. and Love to God is of the same Nature. These Graces and Virtues can't one be without the other; the one necessarily includes the other: *He that loveth God, loveth his Brother also,* 1 John iv. 21.

I shall consider the Gospel-Dispensation *abstractly*, and show its Design to reform Mens Hearts and Lives, to make them good and holy.

Now there are two Precepts which are very comprehensive, and which we may call the *fundamental* Precepts of Christianity; *Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Repentance towards God, as explain'd by our Saviour and his Apostles, is no less than a Conversion, a Change of Heart and Life from the Love and Practice of Sin, to the Love and Practice of what is good: The *Fruits meet for Repentance*, are the keeping our selves from the Sins we have been habituated and accustomed to, subduing sinful Inclinations, being pure and peaceable, bringing Glory to God, and doing Good to Men.

Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ has been a Doctrine exceedingly perplexed by Divines; but

but the Scripture Account of it is very evident: 'Tis a *believing* in the Lord Jesus Christ, a *receiving* him for all those Purposes he is sent for, as one come to *teach* us the Mind and Will of God, to *govern* us by his Laws, as well as to *die* for us. Faith is a vital Principle of Holiness, the great Foundation of, and Encouragement to it, and without Holiness our Faith is nothing at all; and the Apostle *James* exposes such a Faith to the last Degree. To avoid all Disputes; 'tis evident a *Believer*, and a truly *good* and *holy* Man, are the same Person. It is evident no Man is to rely on Christ as his Saviour, and expect any Benefit by his Death, but the Man that sincerely *obeys* his Laws; and, indeed, 'tis the greatest Affront to say otherwise: 'Tis to make Christ the *Patron* of Wickedness, 'tis to make him no Saviour at all; for unless Men are redeemed from their Iniquities, they must be necessarily *miserable*, and be eternally so, unless they are annihilated. He is the true Believer in Jesus, who is conform'd to his Gospel and Example: He it is that honours Christ; and he that is otherwise, whatever Faith he may boast of, may now well be ashamed, and shall hereafter be condemned.

The particular *Precepts* of the Gospel teach Men to *deny Ungodliness*, &c. To go over them would be to go over a great Part of the New Testament. These Precepts of our Saviour,

Mat. v. are very excellent, and vastly exceed all the Precepts of the heathen Philosophers: *Blessed are the poor in Spirit, they that mourn* for Sin, *the pure in Heart, the meek, the Peacemakers, they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness*; they *that suffer Persecution for Riteousness sake.*

The Gospel evidently teaches the Worship of the *one God*, through the Mediator Jesus Christ, and so to abstain from all *Idolatry*; to worship God *in Spirit and Truth*, and so to abstain from all *Superstition*, from all Iniquity and Hypocrisy. It teaches us to fear God, to love him, to trust in him, to be patient under his Hand, to acknowledge him in all our Ways, to promote his Glory. 'Tis full of Precepts of Humility and Meekness, of Temperance, of Chastity, of Contentment, heavenly Mindedness, and of Justice and Charity. Such a clear, such a consistent Scheme of Morality, as the Bible furnishes us with, is to be found no where else: All the Sayings of the *Philosophers*, put them all together, bear no Manner of Comparison to it.

Some, who have lived where the Gospel has been, have wrote excellently on the *Religion* of *Nature*: But whatever they may think of it, they have been much beholden to the *Gospel* for their Discovery: How is it else they have so vastly exceeded all Heathen Writers?

The

The *Doctrines* of the Gospel evidently teach us *Holiness* of Heart and Life; particularly the Doctrine of God's sending his only begotten Son to reform Mankind, and to be a Sacrifice on the Cross for the Sins of the World.

The Doctrine of God's sending his only begotten Son to *reform Mankind*, teaches us Holiness of Heart and Life. If a powerful Prince sends a great Person to Rebels, whom he can destroy in an Instant, with Offers of *Peace*, should it not be a strong Motive to make them submit? much more if he sends his Son? And as God sent his only begotten Son with Offers of Peace, what a Motive should it be to bring Sinners home to God, and their Duty? shou'd they not *reverence* his Son?

We are also taught Holiness by God's sending his only begotten Son to *die on the Cross*, and thereby to be a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World; who also was subject to Death by *his own Consent*. How does God herein shew himself to be a holy, a Sin hating God, the wise and righteous Governour of the World, and one who, as he makes Laws, expects to have them obey'd! Since this is the Way in which he chooses to be reconciled to returning Sinners, how does he teach them to *fear* before him! And how does he herein shew the richest *Grace* and *Love*, that he would *not spare his own Son, but give him up for us all!* What a Foundation does he lay for the Hope of all returning believing Souls!

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He spar'd not his own Son: How shall he not with him freely give us all Things? No Doctrine can have so great a Tendency as this to reform Mankind: Here are the strongest Motives to work on Mens *Fears* and *Hopes*. Can I see what God has done to his own Son in my Room and Stead, and not *fear* to sin against him? Can I see his *Love* to me in all that his Son suffered, and not *love* him, and live to him, in Hope and Prospect of dwelling with him? And if God has so lov'd us, should we not love one another?

As this Doctrine of God's sending his Son to die for sinful Creatures has nothing *incredible* or *inconsistent* in its Nature; so a *Deist*, *supposing* it to be true, must own, I think, that it is admirably calculated to *reform* Mankind.

Another Doctrine is that of *divine Assistance* offer'd and promis'd to Men, if they will seek after it and improve it. How does this *teach* Men to *deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts?* and what an Encouragement is it to them to do their Endeavour, when God will not be wanting to them? As a Father knoweth, or is dispos'd, to *give good Gifts to* his *Children, much more* is God to *give the holy Spirit to them that ask him*, *Luke* xi. 13. How much did *Heathens* want such *Knowledge* and such *Assurance* as this!

The Gospel Doctrines of a *Resurrection*, a final *Judgment*, and *eternal State* of *Recompences*,

pences, a *Heaven*, and a *Hell*, are evidently designed, and admirably calculated to *reform* Mens Hearts and Lives.

Whatever Sects and Parties Men are now of, whatever Distinctions they pass under here, hereafter they are to be rank'd into *two Classes*; the *Just*, the *Unjust*; the *Wicked*, and the *Good*: for the one there is to be a Resurrection to *Life*; for the other a Resurrection to Condemnation. The Judgment that is to pass on them, is to be according to the *real Temper* and Disposition of their *Minds*, according to the *Actions* of their Lives. *To them, who, by patient Continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory, there is eternal Life. But to them who are contentious, and obey not the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness*, are wicked and impenitent, *Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish*: And, that we may by no means mistake who this is for, 'tis added, *Upon every Soul that doth Evil, of the* Jew *first, and also of the* Gentile, *Rom.* ii. 9. The Persons every where in the Gospel mark'd out for *Destruction*, are the *Disobedient*, those that will not take Christ's Yoke upon them, nor be subject to his Laws. Those mark'd out for *Life*, are the truly *Good*, such as are *free* from all *allowed* Iniquity, from all *reigning* Hypocrisy.

If we enquire into the *Nature* of the heavenly *Blessedness*, we shall find, as 'tis such as none but *holy* Souls *shall*, so 'tis such as none but

but they *can* share in. 'Tis the *seeing* God, and enjoying him, the having his Love, conversing with him, delighting in him, serving him with the greatest Readiness and Pleasure. 'Tis a Place of the greatest *Purity*, the most unfeigned *Love*, the most entire Harmony. And who can share in this Happiness, but those whose Souls are *purified*, who have loved God, and delighted in him here below, served him in Truth, who have been *subduing* their evil Dispositions and Passions, been practising *Peace* and *Love*? Evangelical *Holiness* is in order to a *Meetness* for the heavenly Blessedness.

If we enquire into the *Nature* of the *Misery* for Men in another World, we shall find that 'tis such as wicked Men have been *fitting* themselves for, and is the necessary *Consequence* of their *Iniquities*; even to be *banish'd* from God's *Presence, and the Glory of his Power*, to have the Worm of Conscience ever to gnaw or torment them, and weeping and gnashing of Teeth, for the Happiness they might once have had. 'Tis a Place where they are to carry all their *evil* Dispositions along with them: And when stript of all Things that now adorn them, that now amuse and entertain them, what Monsters will they appear to themselves to be? 'Tis a Place where all their *ungovernable Passions* are to be let loose: And what Furies will they be one to another? 'Tis a Place where is to be the

Per-

Perfection of Sin and of Misery. There are indeed, according to Scripture, to be *different Degrees* of Happiness and Misery, according as Men have exceeded one another in Wickedness, or Goodness here; which does not contradict what I have said, that they are to be *perfectly happy or miserable*; for a *small* Vessel may be *full* as well as a *great* one, tho' it does not contain so much: Which is an *old* Comparison, yet I think a very *good* one.

The Gospel does not tell Men of *Elysian Fields*, or of the *imaginary* Torments of *Hades*. No, the Happiness and Misery are vastly *great*, and such as might well be powerful Arguments with Men to deter them from Sin, and to influence them to an holy Life. 'Tis such Happiness and Misery as, if there be another State, Men must share in according as they are good or bad here. And the Gospel does not talk at Uncertainty, as the *Heathen* Philosophers did of another State, but gives Men the *fullest* Assurances of it. The Discovery it self is such as evidences it self to come from Heaven; and the Discoverer confirm'd his Doctrine by uncontestable Miracles, particularly by his own Resurrection, and Ascension.

The *Design* of the Gospel to promote *Holiness* is evident, as it furnishes us with the most perfect *Example* of it in *Jesus* our Saviour: Here was one of the strictest Piety, Piety

free from Ostentation, from all Superstition; one of the sincerest Zeal for promoting his Father's Glory; of the greatest Temperance, Chastity, Contempt of this World, Contentment, Patience; the sincerest Love to Men, for whom he died the Death of the Cross. O should not Men imitate him! how inexcusable will they be if they do not!

The *Rites* of the Christian Religion, *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*, what are they but solemn *Professions* of *Subjection* to God through Christ, and the strongest *Obligations* to universal Holiness?

Every one of these Topicks might be greatly enlarged on.

Might it not be said with great Truth, there is not a *Doctrine*, a *Precept*, a *Threatning*, a *Promise*, a *Rite*, or any Thing in the Gospel, but what tends to promote *Holiness*?

I shall now make Application.

From this Discourse it appears, that our holy Religion is sufficiently guarded against the *Deist*. I heartily wish *Christians* would leave off all *private Wrangling*, and bend their Force against this their *common Enemy*. *Deism* is become a very *polite fashionable* Thing: 'Tis too well known, how much it prevails. Christianity is attacked with great Violence, and that by such as must be acknowledged to be Men of *Parts* and *Learning*:

ing, who act with Craft, and are for *undermining* and destroying Christianity, under the *Pretence* of being *Friends* to it. Their Disguise might be easily seen through: And Religion is such a Thing as will *bear* the most *impartial* Examination; tho' some of its Professors, for want of being well settled in the Grounds of it, or of being hearty in their Profession of it, might be prejudic'd against it, and abandon it.

If a Deist would but suppose there might be such a Thing as a divine Revelation (as certainly he might for Argument's sake) I would ask him, what a Revelation it must be: Must it not be a Revelation, that shall give a very clear and full Account of the *moral* Law? Must not this be the chief Subject of it? Must not the *Worship* of it be *free* from *Idolatry* and *Superstition?* Must not the *Doctrine* of it be design'd, and admirably calculated to promote *moral Goodness?* Must not the *Rites* of it, if any, be *few*, and these not appointed for their *own* Sakes, but as *Means* to promote *moral* Virtue? Must it not offer *sufficient Assistance* to Men to practise their Duty? Must it not *assure* Men of *Recompences* in another World, and these sufficient to influence them to their Duty in this? And must not these Recompences be according to their *Deeds*, such as Reason tells us they have by their Actions been *fitting* themselves for, such as must be the necessary *Consequences*

quences of Vice and Virtue? *i. e.* Must it not be just such a Revelation, as the Christian Revelation is? And if so, has not a Deist great Reason to *believe* it, when it is also confirm'd by *Prophecies* and *Miracles?*

But might it not be objected, I have herein done Disservice to the *Jewish* Revelation? I answer, *no.* For if there may be *one* Revelation, there may be *another* to prepare the Way for it: And tho' it be not so excellent in its Nature, yet being such as the Circumstances of the World would admit of, and carrying on the same *noble* Design, it may be very consistent with the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of God to bestow such a Revelation.

Will a Deist say, *Reason is sufficient for all the Purposes of Religion: There is no need of a Revelation*; and *'tis impossible God should ever give it.* This is such arguing, as that if a Man is resolved, and confirmed in it, 'tis impossible, if there be a Revelation from Heaven, he should ever believe it. But is the Argument *infallible?* for if it be not, and the Christian Revelation be true, 'tis certain, *He that believeth not, shall be damned,* Mark xvi. 16. But is, I say, the Argument infallible? Was *Reason ever found* to be *sufficient* for all the Purposes of Religion? Did it ever give Men so *clear*, so *full* and *consistent* a Scheme of *moral* Virtue, as might be wish'd for, and the Bulk of Mankind called for?

Did

Did it give Men such *Assurance* of divine Assistance as was necessary? Did it afford Men such *powerful Motives* to practise their Duty, give them such a *certain* and rational Account of the Recompences of *another World*, as might be serviceable to all the Purposes of Virtue? After all the Boast of *Reason*, what has it done? And how sunk in Ignorance and Vice has Mankind been, having no other Help? And though considering the Blindness and Darkness, and Viciousness of Men, God was not absolutely obliged to give a divine Revelation; yet wherein was it unbecoming his Wisdom and Goodness to bestow such a Thing? Is it not such a Blessing as the World much wanted, and have much Reason to be thankful for when bestow'd?

But to address my self separately to *Ministers* and *People*.

To *Ministers*.

And here, to speak in the Words of that judicious Author, Bishop *Fowler*, " The " Design of our Saviour and his Gospel be- " ing to make Men holy, those behave " themselves infinitely unbecoming his Mi- " nisters, and the Preachers of his Gospel, " who live unholily. And so do those who " do not, above all Things, promote that " Design: And of this Number are those that " are for high flown Language and boyish " Wit;

" Wit; those who would be admired for
" their metaphysical Acuteness, and doughty
" Dexterity in controversial Squabbling.
" Those also may be reckon'd in, who are
" Men of Mysteries, who endeavour to make
" the plain Doctrines of the Gospel as intri-
" cate as they are able; these are so far from,
" above all Things, endeavouring to promote
" the Design of the Gospel, that it hath not
" greater Enemies in the World. And to
" those may be added, such who preach up
" *free Grace*, and *Christian Privileges*, any
" otherwise than as *Motives* to Holiness, and
" never scarcely insist on any Duties except
" those of *believing*, *laying hold on Christ's*
" *Righteousness*, *renouncing their own Righ-*
" *teousness*; which they that have none at all
" to renounce have a mighty Kindness for:
" All which Things, may, I grant, and ought
" to be preach'd; but to make Christians
" *Duty* to consist either *wholly*, or *mostly*
" in these Things, especially as they are ex-
" plained by not a few, is the Way especial-
" ly to harden Hypocrites, but to make no
" sincere Converts."

" Those again do nothing less than chiefly
" promote *Christianity*, who are never in
" their Element, but when talking of the
" *Irrespectiveness of God's Decrees*, the *Abso-*
" *luteness* of his *Promises*, the *utter Impotency*
" of Men to do any thing towards their Con-
" version; and insist, with great Emphasis,
" on

" on these *dangerous* Opinions. And those
" may also be well reckon'd in, who are of
" a *narrow unchristian* Spirit, who confine
" Religion to a *Party*, and are more zealous
" to make Converts to a *Party* than to an
" *holy* Life."

These Things, with the *unholy* Lives of the *Preachers* of the Gospel, are the Things which make *Atheists* and *Deists*, and harden the Multitude in their wicked Courses. May we, my Brethren, who are the Ministers of the Gospel, be Men of another Stamp, and act in another Manner.

Let us get *true* and *just* Notions of *Christianity*; and, in order to this, let us ply our Studies, and impartially search the holy Scriptures. This, 'tis to be fear'd, is what few have done. 'Tis exceeding evident, to any Man that has stripp'd himself of Prejudice and Prepossession, acquainted himself with the holy Scriptures, with Men, and their Writings, that not only the ignorant, the lazy, the vicious, but those who have been Men of Learning, and Piety, have taken many Things on *Trust*; and that the *Zealots* in all Ages, as they have been for *making Creeds* for others, so they have been so far consistent with themselves, as to *take their own* at first from *others*.

An impartial Search of the holy Scriptures is, indeed, a Thing usually attended with very great Discouragements. A Man hereby

runs

runs a very shrewd Risque of differing in some Point or other from other Persons, even from the greatest Number, and from Councils and Fathers; for they were none of them infallible; and if he does, he may have little Thanks for his Pains. 'Tis not his Studiousness and Diligence, 'tis not the Unspottedness of his Life, nor all the Proofs he may give of his Sincerity, that shall screen him from Censure: No, he may be condemned for a *Heretick*, or as bad, and be treated accordingly, (though, by the way, the Scripture knows *no such Heretick*, and 'tis commonly an Argument, wherewith Persons knock down an Adversary, when others are weak and insufficient.) The impartial Searcher after Truth might be neglected, have his Character *secretly* undermined, or *openly vilified*; he might see the lazy, and such who have believed as others have before them, and who are zealous on so good a Foundation, caress'd, extol'd, prefer'd. Ages and Places have often been where this has been the Case; may they be no more: By these Things Men do their Endeavour to prevent all Progress in useful Knowledge, and Protestants have been running back apace to Popery.

My Brethren, if any of us should ever have our Lot cast into such Times and Places, let us bravely make head against so pregnant a Mischief; let us despise that Favour which we can't have with Honour and a good Conscience;

ſcience; let us act like reaſonable Creatures, and like Chriſtians: And as Religion is a thing of the *greateſt Importance*, let us *ſearch* into our *own*, and labour to be fully ſatisfied of the Nature and Deſign of it. This will be for our own *Satisfaction*, and we ſhall have all that Favour from Men that is worth having.

And being thus fully convinced of the *Deſign* of Chriſtianity, let us act accordingly: Let us ſee that our Religion be not *Superſtition*, that it be not *Prieſt-craft*, a Pretence to carry on baſe Deſigns; let us be free from a *blind*, a *furious* Zeal, and a *perſecuting* Spirit that commonly attends it; and may we always remember there are *other Methods of Perſecution* beſides *dragooning* and *burning*, that when we do not touch a Hair of a Man's Head, yet we may ruin his *Reputation*, his *Uſefulneſs*, his *Family*, and ſend him *betimes* to his *Grave*: Let us be free from all *Looſneſs* and *Profaneneſs*, from all Intemperance, Exceſs, Uncleanneſs, the Pollutions in the World through Luſt. A Freedom from theſe has been the diſtinguiſhing Character of Diſſenting Miniſters: May it ever be ſo! Let us not be of a revengeful, an unforgiving Temper, be proud and imperious, be worldly or covetous, be deceitful and treacherous, be of an uncharitable, an unpeaceable Spirit. *I do not charge any here with theſe Things:* But can it be unſeaſonable

to warn one another of these Things in this evil World? Should such be the Spirit, the Character of any of us, how uneasy might our ministerial Imployment well sit on us? how well might our own Consciences condemn us, for being and acting so contrary to the Religion we preach? and how terrible will our Condemnation be another Day?

What vast Mischief will our bad Example do? O amazing Thought, how many shall we involve in Guilt, and in eternal Perdition with our selves!

My Brethren, let us be Men of another Character; Men of *pure* Religion, of unfeigned Piety, of great Humility, of strict Sobriety, of plain Honesty and Integrity, of sincere Love one to another, and to all Men. Let us be Men of Temper and Moderation, Men of an extensive Charity, (I am indeed for Charity for all who *profess Christianity*, and *live holy and good Lives*. And if this be not the Charity our Saviour and his Apostles have taught us, I know nothing of it: Is it to believe *nothing*, to hope *nothing*, or to *believe all Things*, and *hope all Things?*) Let us be Men of a *peaceable* Spirit, be for glorifying God, and doing Good to Men; thus shall we *shine like Lights in the World:* By these Things will it appear that we are *orthodox* indeed. What Impression will the holy Lives of Ministers make on their People? What Comfort and Success might we promise our selves in our ministerial

nisterial Work here, what a Crown of Glory might we depend upon hereafter!

Is it the Design of Christianity to teach Men to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly? Let us *pursue* this truly noble and excellent Design in all our *ministerial Labours.* Let us convey right Sentiments of Christianity to our Hearers; tell them Religion does not lie in good *Wishes* and Purposes, in going to such a Place, in conforming to such Modes and Ways of publick Worship, in a furious Zeal for any Party or Opinion, or in hating and persecuting those of a contrary Perswasion; that whoever are in the Right, *the Uncharitable are certainly in the Wrong.* Let us tell them, Religion does not lie in a meer Attendance on Ordinances of divine Institution: This Persons may do, and yet be eternally miserable. Let us be so honest as to labour to convince our Hearers, that God will make all Allowances for the *meer Errors* of Mens *Understandings,* when he will make none for their *Wickedness,* their Loosness, Profaneness, their Intemperance, Debauchery, their Knavery and Dishonesty, their Sensuality, that Covetousness which is Idolatry, their revengeful and implacable Spirits, their Hatred of one another, their Hypocrisy, and such like Things: For they who *do* these *Things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Let us labour to reform our People from all

their *corrupt* Errors, such as, That *as long as they believe a-right, 'tis no matter how they live; that Christ will be their Saviour, and God will be merciful unto them, though they go on to rebel against him.* These and such like are truly fundamental Errors, and will surely damn Men unless they leave them.

Let us follow the Advice given to *Titus.* Does the *Grace of God teach us to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly? These Things let us teach, reprove, exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine.* Let us be severe against the *Vices* of the Times, and tell our People nothing will make Atonement for their living in them. Let us perswade Men to *Repentance*, to accept of Jesus for their *Lord* and *Saviour* (as every one does who is a Christian) to conform to his Doctrine and Example, to walk before God in all Righteousness: This will be *sound Doctrine* and uncorrupt; and those of our People whom we can prevail on, will be our Comfort now, and our Crown of Rejoicing in the great Day of the Lord.

Let us faithfully set before our People the great *Design* of Christianity, the great and awful *Motives* there are to practise it, and how inexcusable, how severely condemned they will be if they do not practise it; that *it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha than for them.*

Let

Let us make *no other Distinction* between Men than the Scripture does, than the final Judgment will; *the Just* and *the Unjust*, *the Wicked* and *the Good*; instruct them, speak Terror and Comfort to them accordingly.

Let us not discourage *any of our Brethren* who are carrying on this noble *Design*, nor say any thing to their *Disadvantage*. Let us never represent them as *heretical on the* one hand, or *lukewarm* on the other: This will be *base* and *wicked*.

My Brethren, 'tis *holy Living*, 'tis *Harmony* among our selves, 'tis such faithful and *christian* Preaching as I have been speaking of, 'tis this is the only way to promote Religion in general, and so it is to have the Dissenting Interest flourish. I will not make the ungrateful Enquiry, whether it is sinking or no; but I am sure this only can make it thrive, and render it lasting.

But to address my self to such as may be the *Hearers* of any of us.

You might well ask *which is the Way to Heaven*, and how you may get thither, amidst the various Controversies that embroil the christian World. If the *Learned* can so little agree, and are forced to summons up all their Learning to defend their particular Points, what shall you do who are not thus educated? Why, my Brethren, the *great thing* of Christianity is even uncontroverted, which is *Holiness* of Heart and Life, *founded*

on Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ: This is the *sure*, the *only* Way to Heaven. The Author whom I have already quoted, speaks thus; "Would we know whether we em-
" brace all the Fundamentals of Christianity,
" and are guilty of *no damnable* and de-
" structive *Errors*, among the great Diver-
" sity and Contrariety of Opinions this King-
" dom abounds with: Our only way is to
" examine our selves after this Manner:

" Am I sincerely willing to obey my Crea-
" tor and Redeemer in all Things command-
" ed by them? Do I entertain and harbour
" no Lust in my Breast? Do I heartily en-
" deavour to have a right Understanding of
" the holy Scriptures, and chiefly of the Go-
" spel, and to know what Doctrines are de-
" livered there, in order to the bettering my
" Soul by them, and the Direction of my Life
" and Actions according to them? If we can
" answer these Questions in the Affirmative,
" whatsoever *Mistakes* we may labour under,
" they can be none of them such as will *undo*
" our Souls; because we have reason to con-
" clude, that the *Design* of Christianity is
" in some good Measure *effected* in us. And
" whatsoever Tenets may be consistent with
" the Love of God, and (which is the cer-
" tain Evidence of it) a solicitous Care to
" keep a Conscience void of Offence to-
" wards him and Men, we may be certain
" they belong not to the Catalogue of *fun-*
" *damental*

"*damental* Errors. This *obedient* Temper is "the *most infallible Mark* I know of an *or-* "*thodox* Man: He that is indued with it, "though he may err, cannot be a *Heretick.*" And does not the Scripture say, he that will *do God's Will*, shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be from God or not?

O Sirs, believe these great Truths, that *unless a Man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; that without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* Believe it, the great Design of the Gospel is to make you *good* and *holy* here, that you may be *happy* hereafter: 'Tis to subdue your Lusts and Passions, your evil Inclinations and Dispositions; 'tis to make you love God, and one another with all Sincerity, and to practise accordingly; 'tis to restore you to the divine Image, to make you imitate God in all his imitable Perfections: By these Things, and these only, will you shew that you are *Christians*, will you find Favour with God through Christ, and obtain eternal Life: By these Things only can you recommend Christianity, and be a Credit to it. O never load such who do these Things with *opprobrious* Names, never make the Number of Christ's true Disciples *less* than it is; 'tis little enough already. By this you will do great *Injustice*, as well as great Disservice to Religion in general. Let such, whatever Names they pass under, be the Persons you

delightfully

delightfully converse with; Never be ashamed of them: Flee not these, but the *Vain* and the *Vile*: Know no other Distinction among Christians than the *Virtuous* and the *Vicious*. Behave accordingly; shew on all Accounts a christian Temper; *have your Conversation by the Grace of God*: then shall you at last have that welcome, that transporting Sentence, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World*; when all others (whatever they have valued themselves upon, or placed Religion in) shall hear that dreadful Sentence, *Depart, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

FINIS.

SERIOUS ADVICE

AND

FAIR WARNING

To all that live upon the Sea-Coaſt of *England* and *Wales*,

PARTICULARLY

To thoſe in the Neighbourhood of *Weymouth* and *Portland*;

Addreſſed to them in a

SERMON

Preached the 22d of *December*, 1754, in the Churches of *Fleet* and *Chickerill*, on Occaſion of ſeveral Shipwrecks at that Time upon the Coaſt of *England*.

To which are added,

Some Extracts from the ſeveral Acts of Parliament relating to Ships that are ſtranded on the Coaſt, and the Penalties to be inflicted on all thoſe that plunder the Merchants Goods.

By THOMAS FRANCKLYN,
Rector of *Langton-Herring*, and Vicar of *Fleet* in the County of *Dorſet*.

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PREFACE.

Men, Brethren, and Countrymen,

MY Heart's Desire, and my earnest and continual Prayer to God for you all, is, that you may all prosper in this World, and be saved, thro' Christ, in that which is to come.

In Consequence whereof, I cannot but use my best Endeavours, as a Pastor, and as a Friend, to promote your present and future Interest, by advising you to pursue such Ways as

lead to Peace and Happineſs, as well as to the Food that is convenient for you, warning you againſt the great Sin and Danger of making too much Haſte to be rich, of ſhutting your Ears againſt the Voice of God and Nature, of being deaf to the Complaints of ſuffering Fellow-Creatures, intent only on Plunder, and ſo barbarous and inhuman, as to take Advantage of the Diſtreſſes of thoſe unhappy Sufferers, whoſe Perſons and Effects you ſhould rather protect than violate.

This is the Deſign of the following Dicourſe, penn'd under the Influence of a warm Reſentment of the Calamities which many poor

Souls

Souls ſuffered, in the late diſmal Weather, the Loſſes many honeſt Merchants ſuſtained by it, and the Tears of many Widows and Orphans which it cauſed to flow.

And while the Heart is thus tender and compaſſionate for the Miſeries of ſome, it cannot but ſwell with Indignation at the Barbarity of others, who are ever watchful over thoſe Events, and ready to devour the ſhatter'd Fragments of a ſhipwreck'd Veſſel, e'er they be thrown upon the Shore.

To ſee thoſe, who, from a Senſe of the like Dangers and Sufferings, ſhould, one would think, be always

ready

ready to assist their Brethren, in saving the small Remains of a broken Voyage, rob them of the few Clothes and that little Venture which a poor, half-drowned Sailor had *saved out of the Water*, at the Peril of his Life, to refresh him when ashore, and to cover his naked Family, that has liv'd on the Credit of his Wages, which, perhaps, are lost with the Ship, is enough to make the Stones upon the Shore cry out, if Men were silent; and he that can be an indifferent Spectator of a Shipwreck attended with such like Circumstances, as too often happen, must be entirely void of Religion and Humanity, a Stranger to every other Use of Law, and Justice, and Compassion, than to

break

break thro' them all, when they oppose his Appetite for Plunder.

It has been my Lot to have lived many Years in such a Situation, as to have been an Eye-Witness of several Shipwrecks, and after repeated Expostulations with many of my Neighbours, in order to revive in them the natural Sentiments of Humanity, and stir up the Principles of Benevolence and Compassion, as well as Honesty, in their Hearts, I thought it my Duty to warn them from the Pulpit, to forsake a Practise which was become habitual, and almost general, and therefore looked upon as right and lawful by most of them, till the late penal Law

shew'd

ſhew'd them it was illegal, and that the Offenders would be ſeverely puniſhed.

And now, when thoſe who were deaf to the Voice of Nature and Religion, and wou'd not apprehend the Reaſon of Things, began to liſten to Authority, when the Neceſſity appeared from Terrors of an Act of Parliament, threatening Pains, and Penalties, and Death; and when the Lightning of the Sword of Juſtice had pierced them, whoſe Hearts cou'd not be melted to Compaſſion by the moſt complicated Scenes of Miſery; this was a proper Seaſon to enter the Liſts, and encounter the Prejudices and Paſſions of Men, which

which had long blinded them againſt the Truth; that the united Terrors of preſent and future Vengeance might engage them to hearken to the Voice of Reaſon and of God.

And hoping from the Attention with which this Sermon was heard in my little Churches, that it had reached the Hearts of my Congregation, I was willing to be at ſome Pains to reviſe it for the Preſs, that its Influence might be more extenſive, and be communicated to the neighbouring Pariſhes, which are much more populous, and conſequently more deeply intereſted in the Advice.

And being ſenſible that the Act of Parliament was not calculated only for this Neighbourhood, but that the ſame Spirit reigns along the Coaſt, I reſolved to make it as uſeful, by making it as general, as poſſible. And I hope the well-diſpoſed Gentry will promote the Deſign, by diſperſing the Sermon among their Neighbours and Tenants on the Sea-Coaſt, to try what may be done towards ſtopping the Progreſs of an Evil generally complained of, and juſtly ſtyled in the Act itſelf, "An "Enormity that is a Scandal to the "Nation."

As my Audience conſiſted chiefly of little Farmers and Fiſhermen, I

was

was obliged to adapt my Discourse to their Capacity; and this, I presume, is the common Standard of all concerned in this Advice: And if we can reclaim the Poor, instruct the Ignorant, and make them keep at Home, and forbear plundering, it is to be hoped the other Farmers and better Sort of People will not venture; and surely they ought to be ashamed to send their Servants and Teams upon the Strand, to steal and carry off other Mens Property: Men who have Nothing will sometimes turn Thieves; but they who have Property of their own, should not set an Example that may encourage others to rob them.

Reaſon. Such Men ſhould conſult their Credit as well as their Intereſt: [illegible] not expoſe their Reputation and [illegible] in the utmoſt Danger, for [illegible] of Trifles.

[illegible] the Com- [illegible] Members [illegible]

countenance any extortionate Demand, much leſs go Sharers with ſuch Men in the Spoils of the Unfortunate. Agents are Truſtees for the Merchants, to adjuſt the Quantum, and in ſome Caſes to appoint the Salvors; and therefore 'tis to be hoped that they are Men of diſintereſted Honour and Probity, glad of every Occaſion to encourage Trade, and ſhew the Integrity of their Hearts. If it ſhould ſo happen that Intereſt ſhould be the prevailing Principle with them, I can only lament the Misfortune, and obſerve to them, that "mighty Robbers ſhall be mightily tormented;" and let them look to the Event.

Thus

was by no Means a Native of this Iſland, or the Invention of our Countrymen, and then ſubjoin ſome Extracts from the ſeveral Acts of Parliament made for the Security of ſuch Ships and their Cargoes; that any of them may ſee at their Leiſure, and at one View, what they are to expect as the juſt Reward of their Iniquity, if they will not be perſuaded to deſiſt from it.

The

The old and new Manner of Wreck at Sea, taken from the Perambulation of Kent, *by* William Lambard, *of* Lincoln's-Inn, *publiſhed in the Year* 1656. Page 307.

KING *William the Conqueror* granted to his Monks of *Battell*, Wreck of the Sea falling upon *Dengemariſh*, a Portion of *Wye*, and willed further by his Charter of Donation, that if any Fiſh (called a Craſpeis, that is, Craſſe Piſſe, a great or royal Fiſh, as Whales, or ſuch other, which by the Law of Prerogative pertain'd to the King himſelf)

ſhould happen to be taken there, that then the Monks ſhould have it wholly; and if it fortun'd to arrive in any other Man's Land, (lying between *Horſmede* and *Withburne*) that yet the Monks ſhould enjoy the whole Tongue, and two third Parts of the Reſt of the Body.

Now in the Reign of King *Henry* his Son, it fortun'd that a Ship laden with the King's own Goods was wrecked within the Precinct of this Liberty, which his Officers would have ſeized and ſaved to his Uſe: But *Geffray* (then Abbot of *Battell*) withſtood them, and that ſo ſtoutly, that the Matter by Complaint came

to

o the King's own Hearing; who (to nake known how much he valued is Father's Grant) yielded the latter wholly into the Abbot's own Courtesy.

The same Story observeth a Thing ouching Wreck (or rather Varech, s the Custom of *Normandy*, from vhence it came, calleth it) not unvorthy the Recital; that is, that of ntient Time, if a Ship were cast on hore, torn with Tempest, and not epaired by such as escaped alive within a certain Time, that then his was taken for Wreck, and so sed along the Coast.) But *Henry he first* (saith the Book) disliking the

Injuſtice of that Cuſtom, ordained, that if from thenceforth any one Thing (being within the Veſſel) arrived alive, then the Ship and Goods ſhould not be ſeized for Wreck.

This Decree had Force during all his Reign, and ought of Congruence to have endured for ever. Howbeit, after his Death, the Owners of Land on the Sea-Shore, ſhewing themſelves more careful of their own Gain, than pitiful of other Mens Calamities, returned to the old Manner. Which their unmerciful Covetouſneſs (as I ſuppoſe) provoked King *Edward the Firſt*, by the Statute

tute (that we call *Weſtminſter the Firſt)* to make Reſtitution of King *Henry's* Law; which even to this Day remaineth in Force, nothing ſo heavy againſt ſo poor Men (afflicted by Misfortune of the Sea) as that former ill Uſage was, but yet (as the Matter is commonly uſed) neither ſo eaſy as Chriſtian Charity would, nor ſo indifferent as the Laws of other Countries do, afford; and therefore I will leave it as a Thing worthy (amongſt others) of Reformation, when God ſhall give Time.

By

immediately upon Demand deliver them to the Owner or Person authorized to receive them, or be liable to pay treble the Value, to be recovered at Law.

And if any Person shall make or assist in making a Hole in any Part of the Ship, or steal a Pump, or do any Thing tending to the immediate Loss of the said Ship or Vessel, or aid and assist in so doing, such Person is thereby made guilty of Felony, without Benefit of his Clergy.

And this is a publick Act; and any Officer of Customs convicted of abusing his Trust by Fraud or Neglect, shall forfeit treble Damages to the Party grieved, and be disabled from such or any Employment in the Customs.

Provided this shall not affect the Rights of the Crown, or of Claimants under it, or Lords of Manors, or any that have lawful Claims to Wreck Flotsum, Jetsum, or Lagan.

In the 4th Year of GEORGE *Ist*,

An Act was made to enforce the aforesaid Act, and also to make it perpetual.

Anno 26 GEORGII IIdi.

To plunder Ships in Distress, or steal, take away, or destroy any of their Materials or Goods when stranded, wreck'd or lost, or hinder

der Men from escaping the Danger of the Sea; or to put out false Lights to bring them into Danger, is Felony without their Clergy.

Goods that are lost, stranded, or cast Ashore, if stolen without any Circumstance of Cruelty, if they are but of small Value, the Penalty is the same with that of Petty Larceny.

Justices may issue out Warrants to search for them when stolen, and carried away; and whoever conceals them, and they are found in their Possession, not having legal Right to keep and with-hold them, and not delivering them up, or giving a satisfactory Account how they came by them, shall be imprisoned six Months, or pay treble the Value.

If Goods are offered to Sale, that are suspected to be stolen from a Wreck, they may be stopt, and Notice given to a Justice of the Peace; and if they cannot make out their Property in them, they are to be returned to the Owner, and the Offender imprisoned six Months, or pay treble the Value.

Persons that save a Vessel or Goods for the Owners, or that discover where such Goods are wrongfully sold or concealed, are entitled to a reasonable Reward, the Quantum to be adjusted by the Justices, according to the 12 *Annæ*.

Publick Notice is to be given to the next Justices, or Mayor, or Coroner, or Commis-

 sioners

ſioners of Land-Tax; and any five of them are to appoint Salvors, and adjuſt the Salvage.

Oath being made of Theft, or breaking open the Ship, the Examination is to be delivered to the Clerk of the Peace, and he is to proſecute, or forfeits 100 *l.*

Aſſaulting any Magiſtrate or Officer in his Duty at ſuch Time and Occaſion, is Tranſportation for ſeven Years.

All Perſons aſſembled are to conform to the Orders of the Maſter, or other Officers or Owners, or Perſons employed by them; and in Caſe there are no ſuch Owners or Officers, or Deputy, appointed by them, then are they to conform to the Orders of the Officers of Cuſtoms; or if none, then to Exciſe-Officers; then to the Shetiff, or his Deputy; then to any Juſtice of Peace; then to Mayors, or chief Officers of Corporations; the Coroner; Commiſſioners of the Land-Tax; chief Conſtable; petty Conſtable, or other Peace-Officers; and any Perſon knowingly and wilfully acting contrary to their Orders, forfeits 5 *l.* to be levied by Warrant from a Juſtice; and the Acts of 12 *Annæ*, and 4 *Geo.* I. are in Force, where not altered by this Act; but it extends not to *Scotland*.

A SER-

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

FLEET and CHICKEREL,

ON THE

TWENTY-SECOND of *December*, 1754.

On Occasion of several Ships being at that Time stranded on the Coast.

ACTS xxviii. 1. 2——10. v.

And when we were escaped then we knew that the Island was called Melita.

And the barbarous People shewed us no little Kindness. For they kindled a Fire and received us every one, because of the present Rain and because of the Cold:

——*And when we departed they laded us with such Things as were necessary.*

IN these Words the sacred Historian gratefully records the humane Treatment St. *Paul* and his Companions met with after their providential Escape from the Dangers of the Sea: In the Relation

 whereof

whereof there are ſeveral Things worthy the Attention and Regard of all Men; but particularly of thoſe who *uſe* the *Sea*, or occupy their Buſineſs in great Waters, and of thoſe who *live by the Sea-Side*, and often ſafe on Shore behold the dreadful Danger and Diſtreſs which others undergo. They who go down to the Sea in Ships may learn from the Practiſe of an Apoſtle how they ought to behave; who, when overtaken by a Storm at Sea, inſtead of curſing the Winds or Waves, or any ſuch Language of Hell, addreſſed himſelf to God in Prayer, as we find by the Event. For an Angel was diſpatched to him in the Viſions of Night to comfort and aſſure him that his Prayer was heard, and to reveal to him the Manner in which his Request ſhould be accompliſhed. He had prayed not only for his own Life, but for the Lives of all that were embarked in the ſame devoted Bottom with him; and the

Angel

Angel assured him, that the Ship should indeed be lost, but not a Soul should perish with it; that they should be cast away upon an Island, but, says he, Lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee; that is, He will save their Lives at your Request. Here we see the great Effect of fervent and charitable Prayer, that it prevaileth much with God. For two hundred and seventy-six Persons were rescued from the Jaws of Death by the saving Efficacy of it.

The good and pious Apostle was no Doubt moved to it by a Principle of true Benevolence, and a Desire to promote the Glory of God by the Conversion of so many to Righteousness, expecting to find an Escape, quite providential, work mightily on the Hearts of all that were Partakers of it by his Means; producing in them a sincere Repentance and Amendment

ment of Life, and Faith in that Redeemer whom he preached and prayed to, and who was thus mighty to save.

And no Doubt but it had the desired Effect on many of the Passengers as well as on the Islanders, to whom in this Manner Salvation was brought; but sad Experience teaches us, that such wonderful Deliverances work not alike on all: For they that live and converse with Sea-faring Men often observe with Concern, that too many, who are ready enough to declare the Dangers they have escaped, are yet apt to forget the invisible Hand stretched forth to save them; and thus an Act of Mercy, intended to soften their Minds and produce pious Acts of Gratitude, is turned into an Occasion of hardening them in their Sins, and presuming still more upon the long Sufferings of God.

Such

Such is the Deceitfulness of Sin, that when it is grown into an Habit, it will defeat even the Purposes of Heaven for our Good, and harden a Man's Heart the more for its having been once melted by the Beams of Mercy, tempting Men to continue in it, that Grace may abound. A sad Symptom this of a Soul mortified and dead in Trespasses and Sins! And those whom Mercy cannot reclaim, what can awaken but the terrifying Flames of Hell? So that it greatly concerns all such Persons to beware how they contract an Habit of any Kind of Vice, lest it destroy that Tenderness of Heart by which the Goodness of God leads us to Repentance and Salvation.

Another Thing remarkable in this Relation is, The Duty of all Seamen in a Storm, with Regard to the Ship, and those that

their Sail with them: They are obliged to use their best Endeavours for the common Good and Safety of the Whole. Too many are like St. *Paul*'s Mariners, for consulting Nobody's Safety but their own; and, when Danger presses hard upon them, meanly contrive to escape, and leave the rest to the Mercies of the Sea, which often proves less cruel than those who had abandoned them.

These Men had an Eye to the Boat, and privately launched it into the Sea, under Pretence of mooring the Ship, but with a View to leave it and row Ashore: Which *Paul* perceiving, told the commanding Officer, that if he suffered them to leave the Ship, their Lives would be in Danger; since though Providence had engaged to protect them, yet not without the Condition of their best Endeavours, it was not to save some that the rest might perish,

perish, it was not to save those only who would have all the rest destroyed.

At such a perilous Time, when there is Need of all the Care and Skill, the Strength and Courage of Men, they are not to tempt God by withholding the Use of any possible Means, or giving themselves up to an idle Despondency; since this not only defeats the Succours that Reason would offer, but is presuming on a Miracle for their Deliverance. God often concurs with Men, and makes use of them as ordinary Means of accomplishing his Purpose, giving them Presence of Mind, and as it were pointing out to them proper Measures to effect their Safety, directing them to a proper Place for it, a Creek or Bay with a bold Shore, where they may force their Vessel aground and get safe to Land. And would Seamen ensure the Blessing of God in a Storm, it must be done by joining their Prayers with their best Endeavours, trusting in God's Help,

yet working with it; and this is the ſureſt Means to gain that Preſence of Mind and Power of Action ſo neceſſary on thoſe preſſing Occaſions.

The next Thing obſervable is the Duty of thoſe who live by the Sea-ſide, and frequently behold the Danger and Diſtreſs of their Brethren; and that is, Compaſſion, Aſſiſtance and Relief according to their Abilities.

This is the pure Dictate of unbiaſſed Nature, and therefore one would think ſhould need no Arguments to recommend or enforce it.

Even theſe barbarous People, as they were called by the *Greeks* and *Romans*, not for being cruel, but uncivilized and Strangers to the Polity of *Greece* and *Rome*: They called all Men Barbarians but

but themſelves. Even theſe Men, Barbarians, had a quick Senſe of others Miſeries, and felt ſtrong Compaſſion for Strangers and Foreigners.

Pure and ſimple Nature, till it is corrupted by a ſordid Appetite for Gain, is full of Benevolence and tender Senſations of others Woes. To ſee our own Image, and our other ſelf, ſtruggling with Difficulties, and in imminent Danger of periſhing, has ſo commanding a Power over our natural Affections, that we cannot forbear to ſympathize with the Sufferer; Nature works ſo powerfully in this Caſe, that we may be even ſaid to relieve ourſelves from a painful State of Mind by relieving him.

And this Sympathy or Fellow-feeling is ſo deeply rooted and rivetted in our Nature, that it requires Time and Pains to be diveſted of it. 'Tis an inbred Affection of

the Soul that flows from Benevolence, and naturally feels for others, and inclines us to do them good, unless it be perverted by the Force of Habit, or some other Power, which can warp the Mind and alter its Disposition: Practise only can reconcile us to the unwelcome Task of punishing others, even for their Good.

Self-love is indeed the grand Principle of human Actions, but unless that selfish Affection be corrected by universal Benevolence, we shall not only be tempted to destroy the Peace of Society, but also lose the better Half of our own Happiness in Life; since the good Man certainly derives as much Pleasure from conferring as receiving Benefits.

'Tis a contracted narrow Soul that will not extend itself to embrace a suffering Brother; and 'tis a sordid brutish Temper

that

that can look on others Misery with an *evil* Eye, and exult and triumph over it. Such a Temper as this had ever been the Scorn and Contempt of all Men in all Ages of the World, who have ever looked upon the Merciless and Inhospitable as Monsters, Wild Beasts and Enemies to Humankind. * One of the most antient and most esteemed of all the Heathen Writers, whose Works are delivered down to our Times, gives many admirable Maxims relating to the Duty of Hospitality, and brands several People † for a Disregard to it. And the Barbarians, in my Text, had not yet departed from the Rules of it, which had been established for many Ages among the neighbouring Nations of the *Greeks*, (whose Descendants probably they were) for they shewed a ready and exemplary Kindness to this numerous Company in Distress, "kindling a Fire, and receiv-
"ing

* *Homer*. † The Cyclops and the *Phæacians*.

" ing every one becauſe of the Rain and " the Cold." Beſides, it was the received Notion in the more early Ages, that Angels or Gods, as the Heathen called them, came often in Diſguiſe like needy Travellers, to take Inſpection of human Affairs and human Conduct, to be Witneſſes of the Violences Men committed, or the Juſtice and Humanity they obſerved: And what the Heathens only feigned we know to have really happened in the Account *Moſes* has given us of the Deſtruction of *Sodom*. And the old honeſt Heathen already mentioned, the beſt of ancient Poets, to impreſs a Reverence for Strangers, and a ſolemn Regard to Laws of Hoſpitality, often repeats ſuch Expreſſions as theſe:—— *Strangers and Supplicants come from Heaven, and every prudent Man looks upon a Gueſt and a Supplicant as his own Brother.* And their general Practiſe, which was governed by theſe Maxims, is a Reproach to ſuch

pre-

pretended Chriſtians as have ſcarce any Footſteps of that Virtue left among them, though it be ſtrongly urged and recommended by the Word of God, and by the ſame Motive that induced others to obſerve it, namely, a Senſe of their own Weakneſs and Want of Aſſiſtance *.

But the Son of God is the brighteſt Pattern of Benevolence, who in Pity to our Infirmities took upon him our Nature, and endured even the Death of the Croſs, the moſt ignominious Death, for our Sakes. And is it poſſible for Chriſtians to think of what

* *Non ignara mali miſeris ſuccurrere diſco*, ſays *Virgil*. That is, I learn by ſuffering to pity others and aſſiſt them, which is equal to an Expreſſion of *Homer* in the Perſon of *Menelaus:* And God himſelf uſes the ſame Argument to enforce his Precept of Mercy of the *Iſraelites: Love ye the Strangers, for ye were Strangers in the Land of Egypt.* (Deut. x. 19.) And the Apoſtle *Paul* charges the *Hebrews* not to forget to entertain Strangers, but to pity and aſſiſt them that ſuffer Adverſity, as being themſelves alſo in the *Body*, or ſame fraïl State, ſubject to all that can befal Mankind.

what Christ did and suffered on their Account, and yet disregard his great Precept of Love and Charity, so as not to have common Humanity one for another? Is this to act like Christians, to be Brethren, to be Members one of another, united to Christ our Head? The Voice of Nature and of Grace cries out in Behalf of Mercy, and he that can behold others Misery without a compassionate Sense of it, is so far from being of a christian Temper, that he is less than Man; has lost all that is tender and merciful in Human Nature, is dead to every Sentiment of Benevolence, and has forgot the many Exhortations of the Spirit of God to Brotherly Love, the Blessings God hath promised to the Merciful, and the Judgment denounced against all them that shut up their Bowels of Compassion from them: *They shall have Judgment without Mercy, who have shewed no Mercy.* (Jam. ii. 13.)

I say

I ſay not this to accuſe any one here of ſo barbarous a Diſpoſition as to refuſe Aſſiſtance to the Diſtreſſed.

To do all Men Juſtice, I muſt own, that I know no one in this Neighbourhood that is not induſtrious on all Occaſions to ſave the Lives of them that are caſt on Shore: But there is a Practiſe that is of too near an Affinity to it, from which very few in the Compaſs of my Acquaintance in theſe Parts can fairly be acquitted; and it has a long Time almoſt univerſally prevailed along the Sea-Coaſt, though it be univerſally deteſted and complained of by every thinking Man, and that is, plundering the Ships that are ſtranded of that which might be ſaved for the Merchants and Owners.

This has been long looked upon as a Thing right and lawful to be done by them

 who

who received it from their Forefathers, and practiſed it betimes. And indeed, nothing can reconcile an Act ſo vile, ſo ſordid and ſo ſhocking to any one's Reaſon or Conſcience, but the Frequency of committing it.

Uſe and Cuſtom can alone ſo alter the *Appearance*, though not the *Nature* of Things, as to make ſome Men call Evil Good, and Good Evil. Cuſtom and Practiſe they fooliſhly imagine to be capable of giving them a Right and Title to whatever they can pillage from a Shipwreck, though it is expreſſly contrary to Reaſon and Religion, and the common Senſe of Mankind. It is unhappily true that Cuſtom does encourage though it cannot excuſe Men in doing what is wrong. Example is a powerful Thing, and it were greatly to be wiſhed that the Examples for public Worſhip, Virtue, Goodneſs, Serioufneſs, and every Quality to Society, were more

ful

numerous

numerous among all Ranks of Men than it is to be feared they are.

We can't well ſuppoſe the barbarous People in the Text to have reaſoned in the Manner ſome Men now do; for they not only ſupported and entertained that numerous Company while they waited for a Paſſage into *Italy*, but when they departed they laded them with ſuch Things as were neceſſary for their Voyage.

Theſe ignorant but honeſt People knew no Right they had to enrich themſelves by other Mens Misfortunes, but thought themſelves obliged to aſſiſt and provide for them, and to put them in a Capacity to retrieve what they had loſt. They rightly judged that the Time of Diſtreſs was the proper Seaſon for *Compaſſion*, not for *Spoil* and *Rapine*; and thought it unworthy of a rational Creature, to add Grief to Mens Miſery, to vex the wounded, and contribute

to the total Ruin of immediate Sufferers; to assist the Tempest and the Storm, and be more cruel than Wind or Waves, or Rocks, by carrying off what those not more insensible Enemies had left.

Nay, we have known more barbarous and illiterate People than these, the very native *Indians* of *Virginia*, use all possible Hospitality and Civility to Persons in Distress.

Witness the Narrative of Colonel *Norwood*, which he has left us of his unhappy Voyage thither, *A. D.* 1649, who was left ashore on a desolate Island on that Coast, and at last discovered by a Fisherman from the Continent, who, when the Colonel and his Companions were just ready to perish by Cold and Hunger, carried them over in his Canoe to his own Hut, and received them with so many Circumstances of most tender

tender Compaſſion, that the Relieved could never forget, nor ever ceaſe to be thankful to God for ſuch unexpected Deliverance.

The Remembrance whereof gave the Colonel juſt Occaſion to reproach his Countrymen, who, he ſays, *at that Time*, were ſo deaf to all the Cries of unfortunate Sailors that ſuffered Shipwreck, that, inſtead of affording them Succour, they would ſeize on their Goods, (if not diſpatch their Perſons, to prevent Complaints) as their proper Perquiſites, which the Waves *would* caſt upon the Shore for their right Owners. And the better to entitle themſelves to this Kind of Rapine, they wickedly called ſuch deviliſh Acqueſts by the ſacred Name of *God's Goods*, profaning and blaſpheming that holy Name at the ſame Time that they violated all the Laws of Hoſpitality and Society.

" Whereas

" Whereas our charitable Hoſt, ſays he, " influenced only by Nature's Law, without the leaſt Shew of coveting any Thing " we had, or Proſpect of Requital in future, did not only uſe us kindly and " tenderly as to Food and Raiment, but " did alſo with as much Honeſty ſecure for " us our ſmall Store of Guns, Powder, *&c.* " as if he had read the Duties of the Goſpel, or had given his only Child as a " Hoſtage, to ſecure his dealing juſtly with " us: So that I can never ſufficiently applaud the Humanity of this *Indian*, nor " the Contentment I enjoyed in his Cottage, and the plentiful Repaſts with which " he treated us." He then proceeds to ſhew the great Kindneſs they all received from the good-natured King of that Place, which was ſuch as the beſt bred Monarch in *Europe* could not exceed in Generoſity, though he might in Delicacy; for he took

all

all imaginable Care to feed and warm them all, and found Means to have them all conducted ſafe to *Virginia*.

But to come nearer Home; no Nation ever made a better Figure in Hiſtory than our Anceſtors the *Germans*, for Good-nature and Hoſpitality. *Cæſar* ſays * of the *Germans*, that they eſteemed it a great Crime to hurt or offend a Stranger, on whatever Account he came to them, but they protected their Perſons, as ſacred, from all Violence, and their Houſes were ever open to them, and all they had was free for their Uſe and Refreſhment. And the *Old Engliſh* Hoſpitality was famous even to a Proverb, and came up not only to that of the ancient *Greeks*, but almoſt even of the Patriarchs themſelves. Good-nature is a Quality, I had almoſt ſaid, peculiar to the *Engliſh*; at leaſt, ſo peculiar, that as a noble Writer obſerves, there is no Word for

* De Bell. Gall. C. 6.

for it in any other Language. Such is an *Engliſhman* by his natural Diſpoſition. And hath Chriſtianity, which refined the moſt ſavage Tempers, had a quite different Effect on ours? Is it calculated to mend bad Manners, and does it turn good ones into bad? Surely ye have not ſo learned Chriſt as to unlearn the Dictates of Nature and of Reaſon. If ſo, ye have been taught the Truth to very bad Purpoſe. If the Light that hath ſhined upon your Hearts from the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, that Sun of Righteouſneſs, and Image of God, be turned into Darkneſs, how great is that Darkneſs!

A wicked and abandoned Chriſtian, who, to put on Chriſt, hath put off human Nature, is a Monſter beyond Compariſon, or even Imagination. So that whoever he be who under that ſacred Character breaks through the eternal Laws of Nature and Equity,

Equity, hath denied the Faith, and is worſe than an Infidel; and rather than live among ſuch abandoned People, who hate to be reformed, I would take up the lamentable Wiſh of the Prophet, and ſay: *Oh that I had in the Wilderneſs a Lodging-place of wayfaring Men, that I might leave this People, and go from them.*

But becauſe many pretend to juſtify their Right to what the Sea has thrown aſhore, let it belong to whom it will, I deſire they would reflect a little with me on the Nature and Reaſon of the Thing.

A Merchant freights a Ship with the Manufactures or the Produce of this Iſland to a foreign Country, or perhaps to ſome Sea-port in our own; entruſting his Property in the Hands of Strangers, who undertake to deliver it (God willing) to his Commiſſion, and, perhaps, to bring back the

Return in foreign Commodities, and land it in ſome Port at Home. The Weather proves bad, or the Ship leaky, or the Seamen miſtake in their Reckoning, and they are forced aſhore before the Voyage is completed. There it lies, till the Country take the Alarm of *a Ship aſhore*, and happy is he that comes firſt with his Bag and his Hatchet, to cut and carry off what he can come at of the Cargo or Materials of the Ship. Now as parallel Lines ſhew the Rectitude of each other, ſo parallel Caſes illuſtrate one anothers Truth and Certainty. Hear ye then the Parable of the Land-Merchant. A Farmer ſends his Servants to a diſtant Market-Town with a Load of Wheat: The Roads are bad, or the Servants careloſs, and the Waggon breaks down or overſets upon the Journey; and the People, that live in that Pariſh, where this Accident happens, take it in their Heads to think they may lawfully ſeize

upon

upon the Corn, and convey it Home for their own Uſe; nay, Horſes, Waggon and all, and poſſibly too, knock the Waggoner on the Head, to ſecure them from an After-reckoning. Surely one muſt conclude them to be a Set of Villains and cruel Thieves. And yet, as *Nathan* ſaid to *David*, *Thou art the Man.* 'Tis not leſs a Robbery by Sea than Land, and the Felon in either Caſe deſerves the ſame Sentence.

But ſuppoſing an Agent ſhould be appointed by the ſuperior Officer of the Ship, or of the Cuſtoms, in his Stead, and he employs ſo many Men as he judges ſufficient, to ſave the Goods and the Ship for the right Owners; and they undertake the Charge, upon Promiſe of ſufficient Reward for their Care and Pains. Now ſhould any of thoſe Salvors ſecretly take to themſelves any Thing of Value, or give a Hint to their Confederates to carry

carry off any of it, and convey it away to a ſecret Place, to the Detriment of the Owners, what Character does ſuch a one deſerve, and what Recompenſe? 'Tis not only a notorious Breach of Truſt, but the Law ſays he is a Felon, and deſerves a Felon's Puniſhment. This is plundering as it were by Authority, to ſteal under the Cloak of a Salvor. I ſhall, therefore, take the Liberty to propoſe another Parable, to convince you of the Villainy of ſuch Perſons.

A Farmer's Houſe and Barn take Fire in his Abſence, and his Neighbour, either voluntarily, or at the Entreaty of his Wife, comes in to aſſiſt in putting it out, but ſpying ſome Things of Value, and of eaſy Conveyance, thrown about in the Hurry, thinks it no Harm to pocket and ſecure them; and if he can do it without being caught or diſcerned, thinks them his

his own, and all is well: Others, when his Goods are thrown into the Yard out of Reach of the Fire, take them as their own, and carry them Home or hide them. What do you ſay ſuch a *Salvor* deſerves for his Pains, or ſuch *induſtrious* honeſt Neighbours? Is this fair or equitable Dealing? Is this doing as we would be done by?

Nay, if Goods are caſt Aſhore, and the Ship deſtroyed by the Violence of the Sea, whoever takes them away and conceals them, and they are found in their Poſſeſſion, not having a legal Right to keep and with-hold them, I ſuppoſe (by not publickly declaring what and where they are) ſhall be impriſoned ſix Months, or pay treble the Value. If you find any Thing of Value on the Highway, it does not thereby become your Property, till ye have had it cried in the next Market-Towns, and kept it a Twelvemonth without

out any Claimant appearing to make good his Right; and if you diſpoſe of it without this Proceſs, the Owner may proſecute you as if you had not come honeſtly by it. This is, I think, the Senſe of the Nation concerning the Iniquity of this Practiſe, however right and equitable ſome People may eſteem it, only becauſe they are Gainers by it: So that all ſuch Plunderers ſtand condemned in the Judgment of the World, and deſerve to be ſeverely puniſhed.

It is a melancholy Truth, that Religion takes too ſlender Hold of moſt Men, and Reaſon and Conſcience have in great Meaſure loſt their Native Influence upon their Minds; but eſpecially on thoſe, who, either through Lazineſs or Looſeneſs of Life, have their daily Bread depending on their Fingers Ends, and therefore ſeek it on the Sea-ſhore, or any where, rather than

than by honeſt Labour and Induſtry; ſo that it was high Time for the Legiſlature to conſult the Good of the Community, by denouncing Vengeance againſt thoſe who would not be awed by the moſt ſacred Tyes. Such Men as will not conform to the Rules and Maxims of Society and good Government, are Objects of national Reſentment; and this Sort of Men having long committed Outrages of this Kind with Succeſs and Impunity, have at Length ſo corrupted the Manners of their Neighbours, that Men who *ſhould know better* began to view theſe Acts of Fraud and Violence in a favourable Light, through an *evil Eye* of Covetouſneſs, and thought it no Harm to be Partakers with them in their Sin, by being Partakers with them in their Spoils.

It therefore became the Wiſdom of the State to ſtop the Progreſs of ſo prevailing a Cuſ-

a Cuſtom, by the timely Severity of a penal Law, which may reach the Hearts, and ſtop the Hands of bold and deſperate Villains, whom no Tyes of Conſcience, no Laws of Juſtice, no Fear of Things unſeen could reſtrain, and give a ſeaſonable Check to thoſe who were in Danger of being corrupted by them. Halters and Gibbets are calculated for the daring and the thoughtleſs, but they work powerfully on *all* Complexions, and make Men begin to *number their Days* and *look to their End*, that they may no more do amiſs, but apply their Hearts unto Wiſdom. If therefore any of you, my Brethren, have been formerly led away by Example, and unwarily engaged in this enormous Practiſe, which would be a Reproach to *any* Nation, much more to one ſo well governed as well as reformed, let it no more be ſaid that you are a Scandal to your Country, leſt it ſpue you out as

un-

unworthy its Society. To this End, be adviſed in Time to ſhun both the Danger and the Infamy of this Practiſe. Be very cautious of your Behaviour, and be not tempted by the Appearance of Profit to forego your Credit, and riſque your Lives and Fortunes.

Be not eaſily tempted to paſs much beyond the Boundaries of your own Pariſh on ſuch an Occaſion; and then, if any Shipwreck ſhould happen within your Diſtrict, you may expect, upon behaving honeſtly, and being true to your Truſt, to be generally the Perſons employed by the Agents to ſecure them. There is ſcarce a Pariſh upon the Coaſt but what has Hands enough in it to ſave all that can be ſaved out of any Wreck; and for Men of *diſtant* Pariſhes to *fly Miles* toward one, as ſo many Vultures to a Carcaſs, is mean and ſordid, ſhews a hungry covetous Tem-

per, and no good Diſpoſition to be honeſt.

Let the idle Wretch, that is buſy and earneſt to deſcry from every Eminence a Ship in Danger, and whoſe impious Heart exults whenever he beholds one ſtrike, and oppoſes his own moſt wicked Deſire to the Prayers of the poor unhappy Mariners, expecting with all its Horrors a dreadful Death, which he, amazing Barbarity! wiſhes may be their Fate: Let *ſuch a one* be foremoſt on the Beach to ſhare the inglorious Spoil, and let him in the End meet with his juſt Demerit; for God himſelf hath declared, that "all ſuch as are glad at Calamities ſhall "not be unpuniſhed:" (*Prov.* xvii. 5.) But let all that hope for Mercy at the Hand of God, meet their ſuffering Brethren with open Arms, and ſave them and whatever belongs to them from the Sea; and

what-

whatſoever the Sea throws up, ſave it with as faithful an Heart for the Uſe and Benefit of the Owners, as if it were your own: And this you may well do, conſidering that the Merchants ſeldom grudge an ample Reward for Salvage, if it be done fairly, and without Marks of Spoil and Rapine; and they will make it well worth your while to be both careful and honeſt. But if you ſteal one Half, and ſave the Reſt, you injure both the Revenue and the Merchant's Trade, by vending it without Duty, and at a low Price, and deſerve to be treated as the worſt of Cheats, and Pirates on the Shore. And while ſome are prompted by their Idleneſs and their Wants, or inſtigated by the Devil, to accompany him in his Rounds, when he walks to and fro upon the Earth, ſeeking whom he may devour, let the honeſt and induſtrious Labourer keep at Home with his Maſter in his conſtant Employ, and

he ſhall not want a Reward to ſupport himſelf and his Family, nor the Good-will of his Maſter's for being mindful of his Buſineſs and tender of his Cattle; nor the Credit and Affection of his Neighbours, to aſſiſt him in Sickneſs or Neceſſities, nor the Bleſſing of God on his honeſt Induſtry, and his Peace upon his Mind. This is infinitely better than to be ſhun'd and avoided as a Thief and a Robber; for he that will be ſuch on Board a Ship, or on the Shore, will be ſo in the Barn upon Occaſion; and who will be willing to employ ſuch a Servant?

Beſides, conſider what an indelible Mark of Infamy this Practiſe will bring upon you in the Sight of all Nations, who will look upon you as the Filth and Scum of the whole People that is ſettled all along the Shore; and will dread to approach your Coaſt, being induced to ſay of you as *Abraham* did

did of the Men of *Gezar*, " Surely the " Fear of God is not in this Place, and " they will ſlay us for our Cargo's Sake." Far be it from any of you, my Brethren, to *countenance* a Practiſe ſo juſtly reproachable; give no Occaſion to any one hereafter to *ſuſpect* you of it; but let it be publickly known by your kind Behaviour to People in Diſtreſs, and by your punctual Fidelity to your Truſt, and your Honeſty in returning every one his Due, that ye are influenced and governed by a better Principle; by a lively Senſe of an all-ſeeing Eye, which over-awes you, and keeps you harmleſs in all your Ways; and that ye live under the ſure Apprehenſion of accounting to a juſt and terrible God for every Action of your Lives, and every ſecret Thing, whether it be good or evil. Let it appear to the World, that ye hold the Faith of Chriſt in the Bond of Truth, and in Peace, and in Righteouſneſs of Life: That ye are willing and ready to

provide

provide Things honeſt in the Sight of all Men, and to uſe Hoſpitality towards Men of all Nations without grudging: That ye are the true Deſcendants of thoſe worthy Men, whoſe Houſes were ever open, and Hearts ready, to embrace the Stranger and the Supplicant, as their own Brethren; knowing that God hath made of one Blood all Men that live upon the Face of the whole Earth. Be not forgetful or backward to entertain Strangers, as well out of a Principle of chriſtian Charity, which is kind and courteous to all, and ſeeketh not her own, but the Good of many, as from a Senſe of God's permitting ſome to ſuffer, for a Proof of our Love to him and Faith in his Word. And though I have no Authority to ſay there ever was an Angel ſhipwreck'd to try the Tempers of any People, (and yet methinks the Inſtance of an Apoſtle in the Text comes up very near to ſuch an one, and might probably be deſtined by

Provi-

Providence to try and to reward their hoſpitable Diſpoſition) yet this I may ſafely aver, that every ſuch Object of our Pity and Relief, is in Fact and Reality a Trial of our Virtue, as much as if he were an Angel in Diſguiſe ſent for that very Purpoſe: And if we receive them as we ought, in the Name and for the Sake of Chriſt, whoſe Brethren they are, we ſhall in no wiſe loſe our Reward.

But if, inſtead of comforting them in their Diſtreſs and relieving their Neceſſities, we rob them of that which the Sea, not ſo cruel to Men as they to one another, hath ſpared; or if inſtead of aſſiſting the honeſt Merchant in recovering all we can from the Boſom of the Deep, which devours all without Remorſe or Diſtinction, we truſt in the Fruits of Wrong and Robbery, and enrich our Houſes with the Spoils of the Unfortunate; we provoke God to withdraw his Bleſſing and Protection

tection from us, which alone can make us rich or happy; and to ſend an Enemy into all our Borders, to burn up our Houſes on every Side; or a dreadful Earthquake, to ſhake them to Pieces, or tumble down the whole of this inhoſpitable Rock or Iſland into the Sea, for having contained ſo many Neſts of Thieves and Pirates, as lived chiefly by the Spoils of the Induſtrious.

God has long ſince denounced his righteous Vengeance againſt all them that build their Houſes by Unrighteouſneſs, and their Chambers by Wrong: And the Stones ſhall cry out of the Wall, and the Beam out of the Shipwreck'd Timber ſhall anſwer it, ſaying: "Wo to him that "buildeth his Houſe with Blood, and his "Roofs by Iniquity."

All Riches got by ſuch indirect Means will be no Support to you in the Time of Need,

Need, but will fly away from you in the Day of God's Wrath, or at least will lay as a dead Weight upon your Consciences, to sink you into the Pit of Perdition; will make you no Friends to receive you when you fail, and go down to the Prison of the Grave; but will appear as a Witness against you at the Bar of divine Justice, in the great Day of Reckoning and Retribution.

Let me, therefore, entreat you to have no farther Fellowship with these unfruitful Works of Darkness, but rather reprove them in others that make no Conscience of them. Consider the Injury you do to the Community, by whose Assistance you reap the Fruits of your Labours in Peace and Quietness, and especially to Trade and Commerce, which are the Support and Stay of the Community, and whose Channels you stop and divert, which would convey that Wealth by which Civil Government is maintained, and your private

Property ſecured. Every Man that diſcourages Trade is an Enemy to the Publick, and ought to be treated as ſuch; but to do it in this barbarous ſhocking Manner, is a mighty Aggravation of the Guilt, and deſerves the ſevereſt Puniſhment. It cannot but raiſe the Indignation of all worthy Men, to hear at every Turn the Inhumanity and Inſolence with which the People behave over the Ruins of that which it is their common Intereſt and Duty to preſerve. And therefore it concerns every one to be watchful over it, and endeavour to curb this infamous Practice, and bring all Offenders to Juſtice; and he that diſcovers thoſe who are ſtill bold enough to defy the national Juſtice, as well as the Vengeance of Heaven, is a Friend to his Country, whoſe Honour and Happineſs he conſults; and to Religion, whoſe Sanctions he reveres and enforces. Conſider further, that ſince this publick Declaration of the Nation's Senſe of it, that which before was

eſteemed

eſteemed lawful, or at leaſt indifferent, is now become both unlawful and dangerous, as well as ſcandalous.

Who that conſults his Character would venture to be ſeen near a Wreck, unleſs he be one of thoſe employed to ſave it? It looks ſuſpicious for a Man to lurk upon the Strand, as if he waited an Opportunity to lay his Hands upon ſomething for his own Uſe, that may have eſcaped Notice: But to be diſcovered as a Purloiner or Secreter of Goods entruſted to your Care and Honeſty, is both infamous and dangerous. Be not ye therefore Partakers with them, for ye cannot anſwer it either to God or Man, but muſt expect to ſuffer for it either here or hereafter. And let no Temptation of Profit ſo far delude you as to endanger your Souls; for you may depend upon it, there is no Gain whatever that this World can offer, which will in the leaſt compen-

gained the World, when God taketh away his Soul: Such a wicked Man can have no Hope in his Death.

And if his Children be multiplied, it is for the Sword: And his Offspring ſhall not be ſatisfied with Bread.

His Children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the Poor, and his Hands ſhall reſtore their Goods. (See *Job*, c. 27, 29, *&c.*)

Such are the ſevere Threats of Vengeance which the Holy Scriptures abound with, againſt all them that defraud the Oppreſſed or injure the Poor. So that if there be any Fear of God or Man before your Eyes, or in your Hearts; if there be any Comfort in Love or true Benevolence; if there be any Conſolation in Chriſt, or his Promiſes in the Goſpel; if you deſire any Fellowſhip or Communion with the Spirit of God, which is the Life of all Chriſtians;

if

if any Bowels of Mercy remain in you toward the Poor and the Unfortunate, fulfil ye my Joy: Be ye not only harmleſs, but blameleſs too, the Sons of God without Rebuke, that I may rejoice over you in the Day of Chriſt, that I have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain, when I endeavoured to make known to you the whole Counſel of God, as it relates to your Duty to him and to one another: And the God of all Grace, who hath called us to his Kingdom and Glory, ſhall keep your Hearts and Minds, through *Jeſus Chriſt*; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour and Glory, World without End. *Amen*.

F I N I S.

A

SERMON,

On the Day appointed for a GENERAL THANKSGIVING, 1759.

GOD the Giver of VICTORY:

A

SERMON,

Preached at BIDEFORD, *Devon*,

On the 29th of *November*, 1759, being the Day appointed for a GENERAL THANKSGIVING, for the Succeſs of his Majeſty's Arms.

By SAMUEL LAVINGTON.

4

LONDON:

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PSALM XLIV. 3.

ngt not the Land in Possession by their own rd, neither did their own arm save them; thy right hand, and thy arm, and the of thy Countenance, because thou hadst vour unto them.

the Royal Proclamation we are sum-
moned this Day to the House of God;
and private and publick Business is
led for a Season, while a grateful Na-
offering unto God thanksgiving, and its vows unto the Most High. With
ratitude and chearfulness do we now
le to celebrate the Lovingkindness of
od! Whereas, in Time past, we have
gether with Sorrow and Humiliation,
recate the Divine Judgments, and to
e those Mercies from the Hand of

* Psal. i. 14.

God, the Vouchsafement of which we are now joyfully and gratefully acknowledging. On former Occasions, when we were dispirited by a Series of Disappointments; when our Councils were divided and distracted; when our Expeditions and Enterprizes by Sea and Land were unsuccessful; when our Trade was declining, and our Enemies insulting, and our Hope as the giving up of the Ghost; with what gloom on our Countenances, with what heavineſs and pain at our Hearts did we then assemble in the Sanctuary of God! With what Fervour and Importunity did we then wrestle at the Throne of Grace, for the Divine Blessing on a Land which appeared almost to be devoted to Destruction! With what Humility and Contrition did we then confess those crying Sins, which had exposed us to the severest Judgments; and how did we promise—Oh! how solemnly and repeatedly did we promise, that *if the Lord would turn again our Captivity* *, *and deliver us out of the Hands of our Enemies, we would serve him in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all the Days of our Lives* †; *and that the Blessing of* a Nation *ready to perish should come upon him* ‡! This

* Psal. cxxvi. 4. † Luke, i. 74, 75. ‡ Job, xxix. 13.

me-

memorable Year has afforded us many glorious Testimonies that the Lord *regardeth the Prayer of the destitute, and that he doth not despise their prayer* *. For he *hath remembered the low Estate* of his Servants, because *his Mercy endureth for ever*; he *hath redeemed us from our Enemies*, because *his Mercy endureth for ever*; *and given their Land for an Heritage, for his Mercy endureth for ever*; even *an Heritage to his Servant*, our King, *for his Mercy endureth for ever*; *who giveth Food to all Flesh, for his Mercy endureth for ever* †; who causeth *our Land to yield her increase* §, and hath *filled our Hearts with Food and Gladness* ‖. *Praise ye the Lord, praise ye the Name of the Lord, praise him, O ye Servants of the Lord, ye that stand in the House of the Lord, in the Courts of the House of our God; praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing Praises unto his Name, for it is pleasant; for* we may hope *the Lord hath chosen* Britain *to himself, and* England *for his peculiar Treasure* *. *Blessed be the Lord this Day out of Zion; praise ye the Lord* †.

I apprehend it will not be deemed unsuitable to the Occasion of this Day's Assembly:

* Psal. cii. 17. † Psal. cxxxvi. 21,—25. § Psal. lxxxv. 12. ‖ Acts, xiv. 17. * Psal. cxxxv. 1,—4. † Psal. cxxxv. 21.

It rather appears to me, to anſwer the ſpecial Deſign and Intention of the Royal Proclamation, that we *give Honour to whom Honour is due* †; I mean, that while we cheriſh a grateful Remembrance of thoſe who, under God, have been the chief Inſtruments of our Succeſſes, we ſhould not in the Exceſs of our Joy, and our gratitude to them, forget or neglect to acknowledge the over-ruling Providence of God, as the primary Cauſe of our Succeſs, to adore him as the Giver and Diſpenſer of Victory, and as the abſolute and uncontrouled Diſpoſer of the Fates of Nations and Kingdoms.

The Penman of this Divine Compoſition is not certainly known; however, the Beginning of it is a pious Recognition of the Divine Providence in ſubduing the Canaanites, and giving their Land to Iſrael for an Inheritance: And leaſt this People, who were wont to think very highly of themſelves and of their Anceſtors, ſhould miſtake the Cauſe of their ſurprizing Succeſſes to be their own Merit, or Power, or Valour; he gives them to underſtand, that they were not primarily owing to the Conduct and Courage of their renowned

† Rom. xiii. 7.

General

General *Joshua*, nor to the dauntless Intrepidity of those who fought under him; but to the favourable and efficacious Interposition of the Most High. Accordingly he declares in the Words of the Text; *They got not the Land in Possession by their own Sword, neither did their own arm save them, but thy Right Hand and thy arm and the Light of thy Countenance; because thou hast a Favour unto them.* I am persuaded you have already anticipated me in the Application of these Words to the glorious Train of Success and Victory over our Enemies, and to the Conquests and Acquisitions with which we have been favoured, and which we are called this Day to commemorate. SENEGAL, GOREE, GUADELUPE, LOUISBOURG, and especially QUEBEC, (in which Conquest, in a manner, all NORTH AMERICA is comprised,) are Acquisitions so valuable and important, that we cannot be deemed Friends to our Country, if our Hearts do not feel an inward Pleasure and Exultation; and I flatter myself I shall not be charged with designing or attempting to damp or diminish the publick Joy, or to cast the least Reflection on those gallant Men who were employed in those glorious Expeditions, if I say, that *They got not the Land in Possession by their own Sword, neither*

neither did their own arm ſave them, but thy Right Hand and thine arm and the Light of thy Countenance, becauſe thou hadſt a Favour unto them.

In diſcourſing on theſe Words, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

I. In what Senſe, and on what Accounts it is our Duty to aſcribe our Victories to *the Divine Interpoſition.*

II. How the Divine Wiſdom, Power, and Mercy are peculiarly and ſignally diſplayed *herein.*

I. I am to ſhew, in what Senſe, and on what Accounts, it is our Duty to aſcribe our Victories to the Lord. I anſwer,

1. This is not intended to leſſen or obſcure the Merits of Men, *as Inſtruments in the Divine Hand.*

God himſelf is pleaſed to put an Honour on thoſe who ſignalize themſelves in a good Cauſe, in Defence of their Liberty, their Religion, and their Country. And accordingly when God had determined, in a miraculous Manner, to deſtroy the Midianites by the Hand of Gideon, the choſen Band which Gideon led to the Attack, were commanded to cry, "The Sword of the Lord and of *Gideon* *."

* Judg. vii. 18.

For though God will not ſuffer his Glory as the principal Agent, to be uſurped by or tranſferred to any of his Creatures; yet as he is pleaſed to effect his Purpoſes, by their inſtrumentality; he permits *that* to be acknowledged, provided there be a due Diſtinction preſerved between his Agency and theirs. Wiſe and able Stateſmen and brave and ſucceſsful Commanders, ſhould have their due ſhare of Commendation and Praiſe from a grateful People, whom they have faithfully and ſucceſsfully ſerved. Let then the Names of thoſe illuſtrious Heroes, who have contributed to the Triumphs of this Day, live for ever. Let them be recorded in Golden Characters, in the Annals of Fame; and when the numerous, the unexpected, the aſtoniſhing Succeſſes, and Victories which diſtinguiſh this glorious Æra are mentioned in future Times, let the wiſe conduct and intrepid Spirit of thoſe truly Britiſh Worthies be remembered with the Applauſe they deſerve. It were ungrateful, it were unjuſt, to permit ſuch diſtinguiſhed Services to paſs into oblivion; to ſuffer men, who have deſerved ſo highly of their Country, who have quitted the Endearments of domeſtic Life, and exchanged them for the Perils of the Camp or the Sea, who have ſacrificed their own

own eaſe and ſafety to the Hazards and Hardſhips, which attend ſuch daring and arduous Enterprizes; I ſay, it were baſe and diſingenuous to the laſt Degree, to ſuffer ſuch great and reſpectable Names to lie buried in equal Silence or Obſcurity with theirs that have inſinuated or obtruded themſelves into Places or Stations to which they were unequal, or have accepted Commiſſions which they had neither Inclination nor Ability to execute. But I forbear—The juſt, though extraordinary Honours paid to the Memory of that youthful Hero, who ſo nobly fell before the Walls of Quebec, and conquered in his fall, are a recent demonſtration that Britain is not inſenſible, nor ungrateful to the Merits of thoſe who greatly dare, or freely bleed, or die, in her Cauſe.

2. We are to aſcribe all Victory to God, in order to ſecure his Honour as the firſt Cauſe, and principal, though inviſible, Agent.

It muſt be acknowledged to be difficult, while we are ſtruck with Admiration at the great Qualities, or ſignal Exploits and Atchievements of our fellow Men, to preſerve a becoming Senſe of the Divine Preſence and Agency. Our regard to an Arm of Fleſh is very apt to make us forget or overlook the Arm of the Almighty. David, though a

mighty

mighty and ſucceſsful Warrior, celebrated as he was for his great martial Endowments, readily acknowledged, *it is God that avengeth me and ſubdueth the People under me* *.

In ſome Caſes we can hardly avoid ſeeing and acknowledging the Hand of God; namely, when Succeſs follows the Uſe of unlikely and inadequate Means, when great Effects are produced by weak and feeble Cauſes, when Events of the greateſt Conſequence take their riſe from trifling and inconſiderable Incidents, and when the moſt deciſive and important Victories are gained by a handful of Men, over vaſtly ſuperior Numbers; I ſay, in ſuch Caſes, Succeſs muſt neceſſarily and unavoidably be imputed to the powerful and inviſible Agency of ſome ſuperior Being, and we find ourſelves conſtrained, in a Tranſport of grateful Admiration, to cry out, *Surely this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes* †. Nor indeed is it leſs ſo, when our Meaſures are moſt wiſely and judiciouſly concerted, when the Perſons employed in carrying them into Execution, are moſt eminently qualified for the Truſt repoſed in them

* Jerem. xviii. 47. † Matt. xxi. 42.

Succeſs is ſtill ultimately no leſs to be aſcribed to God, than when it appears to be moſt caſual and contingent. For he gives his Creatures all their Powers of Council or Action, he guides and directs all their Motions, he animates and arms them with Intrepidity, or ſinks and diſpirits them at his Pleaſure, and he has them ſo entirely under his command and controul, that they cannot move or act without his Permiſſion, nor proſper without his Bleſſing. The Royal Virtues of our excellent and venerable Sovereign, the Penetration and Steadineſs of that great Man, who is at the Head of his Councils, and the Conduct and Courage of that heroic Commander, who fell in the Enterprize againſt Quebec, and of his gallant Aſſociates, and of many other of our Officers and Commanders both by Sea and Land; whence were they derived, but from God? and to whom are they to be aſcribed, but to him? *Bleſſed be the Name of God for ever and ever*, ſaith the Prophet *Daniel, for wiſdom and might are his, and he changeth the Times and the Seaſons, he removeth Kings, and ſetteth up Kings, he giveth Wiſdom to the Wiſe and Knowledge to them that know Underſtanding; he revealeth the deep and ſecret Things, he knows what is in the Darkneſs, and*

the

the Light dwells with him *. *Let not* therefore, (ſaith the Prophet *Jeremiah*) *let not the wiſe Man glory in his Wiſdom, neither let the mighty Man glory in his might; let not the rich Man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord who exerciſe Lovingkindneſs, Judgment, and Righteouſneſs in the Earth; for in theſe Things I delight* †.

3. We ſhould count it our duty, and take a Delight in aſcribing our Succeſs to Divine Providence, becauſe it endears and ſweetens our Victories to conſider them as proceeding from God, and as being an eminent and ſignal Diſplay of Divine Favour.

A Declaration of War is a Kind of Appeal to God, no earthly Tribunal being able to adjuſt or determine the Quarrels of contending Kings and Nations. When the Sword is therefore drawn, the Deciſion is referred to the Supreme Monarch of the World, and it is his Power which either ſucceeds, or blaſts, the beſt concerted and beſt conducted Enterprizes of Men. I do not ſay that Succeſs is a ſure Proof of the Goodneſs of any Cauſe;

* Dan. ii. 20,—22. † Jerem. ix. 23, 24.

to have been made, rather in Obedience to the Call of Duty, than with any very ſanguine Expectations of Succeſs, when the advanced Seaſon of the Year preſſed hard upon our Fleet, to retire from a River which was beginning to grow rough and rapid, and where they were in danger of being locked up by the ſetting in of the Ice, or deſtroyed by tempeſtuous Weather. It really enhances the Pleaſure ariſing from our Conqueſts, to regard them as Divine Gifts; we hold them as it were by a firmer Tenure; we call them ours with greater Confidence than we ſhould otherwiſe do. Whereas thoſe who diſbelieve a Providence, can take no Conſolation of this kind from their Succeſs, becauſe the ſame Chance that has been favourable To-day, may be unfavourable To-morrow. But God is faithful and immutable, and his Affections to his choſen People are ſteady and invariable: So that if we ſecure him on our Side, by a right Improvement of his paſt Mercies, we may apply to ourſelves theſe words, which were ſpoken to the Children of Iſrael, *The Lord did not ſet his Love upon you, becauſe ye were more in number than any People; but becauſe the Lord loved you, and becauſe he would keep the Oath which he had ſworn unto*

your Fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty Hand, and redeemed you out of the House of Bondmen, from the Hand of Pharaoh, King of Ægypt *. And the Favour of God, not only endears, but secures our Success and our Acquisitions. As it is said, *The Fear of the Lord was on all the Kings of those Countries, when they heard how the Lord fought against the Enemies of* Israel; *so the Realm of* Jehosaphat *was quiet; for his God gave him rest round about* †.

II. I am to shew how the divine Wisdom, Power and Mercy, are peculiarly and signally displayed herein.

All the Works of God, in all Places of his Dominions ‡, praise him; even in the common and stated Course of Nature and Providence are *clearly seen his Eternal Power and Godhead* §. But sometimes the All-glorious Jehovah exerts as it were, (I speak it with the lowliest Reverence) his more vigorous Efforts, and *the Most Mighty girds* his *Sword upon his Thigh, with his Glory and his Majesty, and in his Majesty rides prosperously, because of Truth and Meekness, and Righteousness; and his Right Hand teaches him terrible Things* ||. At such Seasons there is a more remarkable display,

* Deut. vii. 9. † 2 Chron. ii. 29. ‡ Psal. ciii. 22. § Rom. i. 20. || Psal. xlv. 3, 4.

1. Of

1. Of infinite Wisdom: stiled, in our Text, *The Right Hand of God*; as it was that which directed all the Motions of the Children of Israel, marked out their Camps, regulated their Marches, and pointed out to them the surest Way to Victory and Triumph. *The Wisdom of the World*, (saith the Apostle on a different Occasion, though in Words very applicable to my present Purpose,) *and of the Princes of the World, cometh to nought* *. But thanks be to God we have abundant Testimony of this in our late Experience: For who but he, whose all-penetrating Eye not only pierces the Cabinets of Princes, but who *searcheth the Hearts and trieth the Reins* † of the Children of Men, *and understandeth their Thoughts afar off* §, could have unveiled the deep-laid Designs of the crafty, and disconcerted the Combination of the Mighty, against our magnanimous Protestant Ally? Who but he, who is *wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in working* ‡, could have enabled him to find Resources and Expedients for maintaining his ground thus long, against the united Efforts of the most formidable

* 1 Cor. ii. 6. † Jerem. xvii. 10. § Psal. cxxxix. 2. ‡ Isaiah xxviii. 29.

Power

Powers of Europe. And to come nearer home, who but *the Father of Lights*, hath directed our Publick Councils, hath suggested such prudent and vigorous Measures as have suddenly changed our Prospects, awakened us from our Supineness and Timidity, roused the British Spirit, and united all Parties, with a Zeal unknown and unexampled, (at least in later Ages) in Support of the Honour and Interest of their Country? To him we owe it, that the Councils of France have lost their boasted Consistence, that one unsuccessful Prime Minister resigns his Place to another, and that every new Administration is signalized by some new Disappointment; that the Design of an Invasion of these Kingdoms, which has been so long forming, is not yet ripe for Execution; that they have not been able to secure their own Coasts from frequent Insults, and almost perpetual Alarms; that their Finances are so low, as that they are reduced to the most desperate and disgraceful Methods to supply their present pressing Necessities, and that in the emphatical Language of Scripture, *they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken Man, and are at their Wits end* *; I say it is

* Psal. cvii. 27.

for who in the Heavens can be compared unto the Lord? and who among the Sons of the Mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy Faithfulness round about thee * ? But

3. He has magnified his *Mercy* above all his Name.

If God had not *had a Favour* unto the Children of Israel (according to the Expression in our Text) and *lifted up the Light of his Countenance upon them*, neither *his Arm* nor *his Right Hand*, neither his Power nor his Wisdom, had ever appeared for them. Now there are two Circumstances which signalize Mercy, and render the Goodness of the Lord more conspicuous and affecting.——And the first is,

1. When the Persons on whom it is conferred are every way unworthy of it.

When he might justly have rejected Israel for their Sins, when he might have cast them away from his Presence, and suffered those that hated them to rule over them, that he should then give them the Necks of their Enemies; and when he might have cut off the very Remembrance of such an ungrateful and

* Psal. lxxxix. 5, 6, 8.

rebel-

rebellious People from the Earth, that he ſhould then crown their Enterprizes with Succeſs, and enlarge their Dominions; and when he might have executed all his Wrath, and made their Plagues wonderful, that he ſhould then not only ſpare, but bleſs them; is ſuch a Triumph of Mercy, as he will have all his People obſerve and acknowledge. Very remarkable is the Earneſtneſs with which God elſewhere preſſes this upon the Children of Iſrael, *Speak not thou in thy Heart, that the Lord thy God hath caſt them out from before thee, ſaying, For my Righteouſneſs the Lord hath brought me in to poſſeſs this Land; but for the Wickedneſs of theſe Nations, the Lord doth drive them out from before thee; not for thy Righteouſneſs, nor for the Uprightneſs of thy Heart, doeſt thou go to poſſeſs their Land; but for the Wickedneſs of theſe Nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee; that he may perform the Word which he ſware unto thy Fathers,* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob: *Underſtand therefore that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good Land to poſſeſs it for thy Righteouſneſs, for thou art a ſtiff-necked People* *.

It is not impoſſible that we may be ſo vain and arrogant as to *ſacrifice to our own Net, and*

* Deut ix. 4, 5, 6.

burn

burn Incenſe to our own Drag *; to imagine that our extraordinary Succeſs is the Reward of our extraordinary Piety, and that it is becauſe we have more Religion and Virtue than the Reſt of the World, that we have been ſo greatly and ſignally proſpered. If indeed we ſink into a Forgetfulneſs what manner of Perſons we are, we may thus imagine; but if we examine into the moral and religious State of the Nation, if we enquire where any conſiderable Numbers (in Proportion to the Bulk of the People) who are eminent for true Godlineſs, for Piety and Purity, and for the Profeſſion and Practice of pure and uncorrupted Chriſtianity, reſide, whether in the City or the Country, we have reaſon to bluſh at our haſty and miſtaken Computation, and to confeſs that we are preſerved from general Deſolation, as Sodom and Gomorrah might have been, by ſome few righteous Perſons found among us. For did ever Iniquity abound more? Was the Love of profeſſing Chriſtians ever more cold and frozen? Was the Name of the Lord our God ever more commonly blaſphemed? Did ever profane Swearing and Curſing more abound in our Navy and Army? Was ever

* Habakuk i. 16.

the Lord's Day more loosely observed, I should rather say, more daringly profaned, by Persons of all Ranks and Conditions? Was ever the Spirit of God more highly provoked to withdraw? Was ever the Son of God more shamefully——But I ought not to make this a Day of Reproach, which is devoted to Congratulation and Joy. Surely we had little Reason to expect that God should have been on our Side, or should have fought for us against our Enemies, after we had abused so many almost miraculous Deliverances in Time past, and when our Abominations might have been a sufficient Provocation to him; not only not to assist us, but to assist our Enemies. However, from the extraordinary Nature and Number of our Successes, we have Reason to hope that he is still among us, that notwithstanding all our Backslidings he regards us as his People, and that he is trying if by his *Goodness* he may even yet lead us to Repentance; and at the same Time that he rekindles our Gratitude and Love, he encourages our Trust and Confidence and Joy, so that if we do not by our Perverseness forfeit his returning Favour, we may smile at the Threatnings of our Enemies, we may *laugh at the Shaking of*

their

their Spear *, and even now that their Fleet is failed, and they have exhausted all their Strength to make one desperate Effort, we may notwithstanding rejoice in hope, that *God, even our own God, will bless us* (A).

2. The Mercy of God is signally displayed, when the Consequences of a Victory are highly advantageous.

The Honour accruing from Victory is pleasing and grateful; but when it is attended with lasting Benefits, and valuable Acquisitions to a Nation, as the Mercy is greater so it is more acceptable and grateful still. And thus it undoubtedly was, when in the Instance before us, the victorious Israelites had their Enemies *Lands, and Cities, and Vineyards given them for an Heritage* †. Victories are sometimes dear bought, and the Advantages accruing from them will not compensate for the Blood and Treasure expended in obtaining them. A great General once said, when he was congratulated on his Success in a very obstinate and bloody Engagement, "Such "another Victory would ruin me." — But when in Consequence of our Success, our Do-

* Job xli. 29. † Josh. xxiv. 13.

(A) The Advice of the Defeat of the Brest Fleet by Sir Edward Hawke, did not arrive till after the Day of Publick Thanksgiving, on which this Sermon was preached. And in this God *did bless us* according to our hopes.

minions

minions are like to be enlarged, our riches increaſed, our Trade improved, and our Enemies are greatly weakened and diſtreſſed; it is a proportionably convincing Argument, that herein God *had a favour unto us*. I own myſelf not enough verſed in mercantile Affairs, to determine how many profitable Branches of Trade will be opened in Africa, by the Conqueſt of Senegal and Goree; what greater Quantities of Sugar, Coffee, Cotton, and Indigo, will be imported by our being in Poſſeſſion of Marygalante and Guadelupe; how greatly our Fiſhery will be enlarged and ſecured by the Acquiſition of Cape Breton and the Iſle of St. John's; and above all, what an almoſt univerſal Trade will be opened by the Reduction of Canada.——So far we all know, they were the principal Sources from whence our Enemies derived their Wealth and Power; and ſhould Providence continue them in our Poſſeſſion, and give us Wiſdom to improve them, we may expect to find them of more real Service to this Nation than all the Gold Mines of Mexico or Peru.

But the happieſt Conſequence of all would be, the Opportunity it might open to us, of introducing the Goſpel amongſt the Indian Nations; which it is hoped, ſhould we extend our Territories on the Continent of America,

 and

and be settled in the peaceable Possession of them, our Governors will readily and seriously encourage. Human policy suggests it, and Christian Benevolence strongly recommends it. Nothing will more familiarize and endear their Conquerors, nothing will more attach them to our Interest, nothing will more effectually annex them to our Crown, and be a firmer Tye upon their Allegiance, than Gratitude for the Gospel. Who can help anticipating the joyous (and God grant it may not be a far distant) Time, when amongst other valuable Exports from this Country to our Colonies, there shall be a large Demand for the BIBLE? When the *Word of the Lord shall have free Course, and run and be glorified* *; when God shall *give* his Son *the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for his Possession* †; when Converts shall *fly as a Cloud, and as Doves to their Windows* ‡, *and a Nation shall be born* in a Day §. In this View, we may be allowed to rejoice in beholding new Towns, new Forts, new Harbours, and new Islands, added to our Territories in America and the West-Indies; and

* 2 Thessal. iii. 1. † Psal. ii. 8. ‡ Isaiah lx. 8. § Isaiah lxvi. 8.

to

to triumph in Quebec, as a Key to a new World, and as giving us the moſt encouraging Proſpect of extending both Commerce and Chriſtianity.—What I have ſuggeſted I would be underſtood to ſpeak with the utmoſt Modeſty and Caution, ſenſible, whether the future Events of this War ſhall be proſperous or adverſe is entirely in the Hand of Providence; and confiding in the Wiſdom of our Governors, that Peace (whenever we are favoured with ſo deſirable a Bleſſing) will be concluded on the beſt Terms, which our Circumſtances will admit, for the Security and Welfare of theſe Nations, and of our Colonies, for the firmer Eſtabliſhment and Support of the Proteſtant Intereſt in Europe, and for rendering our Tranquility both honourable and durable.

Great and ſignal, Britons and Fellow-Proteſtants, is the Glory and Importance of the Conqueſts I have been juſt enumerating; and they demand our warmeſt Gratitude and Thankfulneſs to Almighty God. But I muſt remind you of one Victory which I have not yet named, and which it becomes us this Day to celebrate: A Victory, which, whether we conſider the Nature of the Conflict, the Power of the Adverſary, the Dignity of the Conqueror, or the glorious Fruits and Effects of

his Conquests, greatly exceeds the boasted Triumphs of this memorable Year. I am not commissioned to inform you, that our glorious Ally, the King of Prussia, hath totally defeated the Austrian Armies, or that our Enemies are driven out of their Settlements in the East-Indies, or that their Fleets and Armaments, prepared at a vast Expence, for invading us, are destroyed or dispersed.—No; I am this Day * to remind you of an infinitely superior and more important Victory than any of these would have been, I mean, the Triumph of our Redeemer over Sin and Satan, over Death and Hell, who were leagued and combined against us, by whom this World was enslaved, and by whom it would have been ruined and destroyed, *if the Spirit of the Lord God* had not come *upon* this Great Captain of our Salvation, had not *anointed him to preach good Tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken in heart, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord, and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort them that mourn, to give unto*

* The Day when this Sermon was preached was, in Course, the Day of Preparation for the Sacrament, which was to be administered the ensuing Lord's Day.

them

them that mourn in Zion, beauty for ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness *. The Fruits of his Victory, which we already enjoy, are numerous and important. Hereby being released from a worse than Ægyptian Bondage, and delivered from a Darkness that might be felt, we are translated in the *Marvellous Light* of the Gospel, and into the glorious *Liberty of the Sons of God*. We are admitted to Terms of Peace and Reconciliation with the great Monarch of the Universe, whose Favour we had forfeited by our unnatural Alliances, and by our unprovoked and obstinate Rebellion. Hereby a Free Port (if I may be allowed the Expression) is opened in Heaven; where every humble and truly contrite Soul may purchase the invaluable Blessings of Pardon and Peace, Patience and Fortitude, and in short whatever, in a Foreign Country, and in a State of Indigence, it can be supposed to want, or can reasonably desire. Hereby *are are no longer Strangers and Foreigners, but we become Fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houshold of God* †; hereby we have *the Privilege of becoming the Sons of God; and if*

* Isaiah lxi. 1, 2, 3. † Eph. ii. 29.

Sons,

Sons, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-Hei[illegible] *with Christ* *; and we have received th[illegible] *Earnest* of our future Inheritance. O[illegible] FAITH and HOPE, whom we sent to spy o[illegible] the promised Land, are returned laden wi[illegible] the Clusters of *Eschol*; and they assure [illegible] that it is a goodly Land, a Land flowing wi[illegible] Milk and Honey †, and replete with Blessin[illegible] *which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive* ‡: they assure us, that there is *no Night there*, and yet that the Sun doth not scorch by Day; that there is no Winter there, and yet no Draught arises from an Eternal Summer; that there is *the River of Life, the Water of Life*, and *on either Side of the River* grows *the Tree of Life, which bears twelve Manner of Fruits, and yields her Fruit every Month; and the Leaves of the Tree are for the healing of the Nations* §; that the Inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick; Sighing and Sorrow shall flee away, and the Voice of Weeping, Lamentation, and bitter Mourning shall be heard no more; that the City hath Walls, and Towers, and Bulwarks, so strong and lofty, that there no Ene-

* John i. 12. Gal. iv. 7. † Numb. xiv. 7, 8.
‡ 1 Cor. ii. 9. § Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

my

my can ſurprize or alarm; that the Land is a Land of perfect Harmony, where reigns univerſal and everlaſting Peace, where Nation ſhall not riſe up againſt Nation any more, nor Kingdom againſt Kingdom; where the Bitterneſs of Parties, and the Noiſe of War, ſhall be known no more for ever; that *the City hath no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon, for the Glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof; and the Nations of them that are ſaved walk in the Light of it, and the Kings of the Earth bring their Glory and Honour unto it, and the Gates of it are not ſhut at all by Day, (for there is no Night there;) and they bring the Glory and Honour of all Nations into it; and there in no wiſe enters into it any Thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lye; but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life* *. This is the magnificent Account which the Sacred Records have given us of the heavenly Canaan, obtained and ſecured by Victory of the Captain of our Salvation, over Death and Hell, for all who fight under his Banner, and are faithful unto Death. And our Lord, and Head, and Leader hath already taken Poſſeſſion in our

* Rev. xxi. 23.

Name;

Name; and not all the Powers of Earth or Hell can deprive thoſe who are faithful Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, of the everlaſting Enjoyment of their promiſed Inheritance. And ſhall we, my Fellow Chriſtians, ſhall we imagine that we can never ſufficiently celebrate the Memory of thoſe to whoſe Bravery we are, under God, indebted for our temporal Succeſſes? and are no Honours due to the Name and Memory of our all-conquering Saviour, for an everlaſting Triumph, for the Acquiſition of an incorruptible Inheritance? Shall coſtly and expenſive Monuments be erected to eternize ſome bold and intrepid Enterprize of a Fellow-Worm? And when we are required to record the Memory of the great Captain of our Salvation, in an Ordinance of his own Appointment, by eating Bread and drinking Wine, in remembrance of him; Shall we pray to be excuſed from this eaſy and inexpenſive Service, as if ſome difficult and dangerous Atchievement, or ſome coſtly and burdenſome Service were required of us? Shall we deſpiſe the glorious Privileges he offers, the leaſt of which was bought with his Blood; and ſhall we refuſe to *follow him through the Gates into the City*; notwithſtanding he hazarded, notwithſtanding he ſacrificed his own Life, to

 break

k down the ſeparating Wall, and to open
ſſage for us, and to introduce us into the
and Glories of his heavenly Kingdom?
ere is our boaſted Honour? Where is our
lic Spirit? Where is our Gratitude? Where,
is our Humanity? Dare we pretend to
a Tribute of Gratitude to the Heroes of
Day, and not one Tongue move in the
ſe, not one Trophy erected to the Honour
im to whom we are infinitely indebted?
eſpouſed our Cauſe in the laſt Extremity,
where our immortal Intereſt was depend-
who *was wounded for our Tranſgreſſions,*
bruiſed for our Iniquities *; who *trod the*
-Preſs of his Father's Wrath alone, and of
People there was none with him †; who
betrayed into the Hands of his Enemies
ne of his Diſciples, and forſaken by all
reſt; who perſevered notwithſtanding in
generous Undertaking, bore up with di-
and unſhaken Fortitude under Indignities
Tortures innumerable; maintained the
t even after his Body ſtreamed with Blood;
at laſt, (though not till he had received
ortal Wound from a Roman Soldier)

* Iſaiah liii. 5. † Iſaiah lxiii. 3.

cried, with a loud Voice, *It is finished* *: Thus He triumph'd when he fell; by dying *He destroyed Death, and him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil* †; and with his last Breath he proclaimed the joyful Victory. I say, shall those who fight our Battles on Earth meet with more regard than the Captain of our Salvation? Shall our petty Conquests in these Lower Regions, give us more delight than the Promise of the heavenly Glory? Shall *the Children of this World* be always *wiser in their Generation*, and more grateful, *than the Children of Light* §? I beseech you, permit me to be a successful Advocate for our divine, but much-injured, Benefactor. Our political Prospects are undoubtedly bright and glorious; and the Names of those brave Men, who, under God, were the Means of rendering them so, are deservedly dear to us; such repeated and important Successes loudly demanded a Day of Publick Thanksgiving; and we should esteem it a great Mercy, that the whole Nation is so unanimously disposed to bring all the Lawrels of this glorious Year to adorn God's Altars, and to make their

* John xix. 30. † Heb. ii. 14. § Luke xvi. 8.

united Acknowledgments to the Lord of Hosts. Let this Day, devoted to the Commemoration of them, be witness to every innocent and decent Expression of our Joy. But let not all our Gratitude be exhausted on this Occasion; let us remember, that, as Christians, we have a higher and a nobler Call for it. The ensuing Lord's Day will give us an Opportunity of exerting it. When therefore Jesus Christ *is evidently set forth as crucified before our Eyes* *, let our Eye affect our Hearts; and with the Emblems of his mangled Body in our Hands, and with our Souls transported at the unspeakable Advantages arising from his Death, let us resolve and actually begin to erect a Monument in every Heart, sacred to the immortal Memory of Jesus. Let us every Day add one Stone at least to the Spiritual Building; and, at last, when it is got high above the Clouds, and the Top-Stone is laid in Glory, let us shout, GRACE, GRACE unto it †; and by the same impressive Finger, which wrote the two Tables of Stone, let this Inscription be engraven,

Worthy is the LAMB *that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and*

* Gal. iii. 1. † Zech. iv. 7.

Strength,

Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing; for he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and hath made us to our God Kings and Priests *: To whom be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

* Rev. v. 9, 10, 12.

F I N I S.

A

SERMON

PREACHED TO A

CONGREGATION

OF

PROTESTANT-DISSENTERS

AT

Sidmouth in Devonſhire,

ON

THURSDAY, Nov. 29, 1759.

Being the Day appointed for a

PUBLIC THANKSGIVING.

By J. HOGG.

5

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN publications of this kind the importunity of friends hath been often pleaded, and as often disregarded. For after all apologies which can be made, people will exert their natural right *of judging, concerning the propriety of the publication, from the performance itself. The author however requests, that his youth and inexperience, joined with the small time usually allotted for such compositions, when they are not designed to make their appearance in the world, may be deemed at least* some *excuse for any want of sentiment, or inaccuracy of expression that may appear. Let also the place where it was delivered, a* small *congregation in the* country, *be remembered. If after these allowances are made, and such others as candour will readily suggest, sentence of condemnation should be passed, the public need not fear being put to the trouble a* second *time.*

ISAIAH xxv. 9. and xliv. 23.

Lo this is our GOD, *we have waited for him, and he will save us. This is the* LORD, *we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. Sing O ye heavens, for the* LORD *hath done it: shout ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing ye mountains, thou forest, and every tree therein. For the* LORD *hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.*

AMONG the civilized part of mankind, when they have been successful in war, or have received any remarkable national deliverances, it hath been a constant custom, to set apart days for solemn thanksgiving to that being, whom they regarded as the governor of the universe. Such acknowledgments are indeed no more, than the ascribing to GOD that glory, which is in the highest degree reasonable and just. For as the LORD of universal nature, and the director of all

the various events which occur, whatever happens, whether it respects nations or private persons, must be subject to his controul. A bare *permission* therefor, is in the *present* case equal to the *actually ordaining* the things which come to pass.—The same to all the purposes of supplication or thanksgiving. For they must all be considered as parts in the scheme of providence; each of them the best calculated in its particular connection with others, to answer that important end which the Divine Being hath ever in view. We especially who have often waited upon God in our distresses, and supplicated him to save us; are under the strongest obligations to rejoice in that deliverance, which he hath so wonderfully wrought out. Let us therefor at this time summon all the powers and faculties of our minds, to assist us in raising and animating our devotions. Let us call upon all our kindred and friends,—upon our children, our servants, and our household,—upon all that are dependent on us, or with whom we are any way connected, to join with us in this sacred song of thanksgiving to our God. Let all ranks and orders of men among us, our inferiors, our equals, our gentry, our judges, our governors, our nobles, our princes and our king; all unite their joyful voices, and lift up their grateful hearts to him, who defendeth his people, and disappointeth

pointeth the devices of their enemies. Let our colonies and ſettlements abroad, our fleets, our allies, and all our friends in every part of the earth, re-eccho the pleaſing ſounds. And let all the people ſay *Amen*, praiſe ye the LORD.

The words choſen for our text, point out ſeveral things, which will very properly employ our meditations at this time.

FIRST, They ſhew the duty of nations, and intimate to us the practice of *Iſrael* when in diſtreſs: *viz.* waiting upon GOD by prayer and ſupplication.

SECONDLY, We have the reſolutions which people in diſtreſs form, of rejoicing in, and praiſing GOD, if he ſhould deliver them.

THIRDLY, We may obſerve the happy conſequences of ſuch a conduct.

FOURTHLY, The Words point out, where the praiſe and glory of all ſhould terminate. And,

FIFTHLY, They teach us the joyful effects, the exultation and triumphs, which the contemplation of theſe mercies ſhould produce in our minds, engaging us to pay our moſt grateful thankſgivings to GOD, and to ſummon all around us to join in the ſame delightful ſervice.

Each

Each of theſe particulars are peculiarly applicable to our late and preſent national circumſtances. In this view we ſhall inſiſt on them, and of each in their order.

FIRST, We ſee the duty of nations, and the practice of *Iſrael* of old when in diſtreſs: waiting upon GOD by prayer and ſupplication.

Calamities have frequently a good effect on the minds, both of private perſons and nations. They teach them to conſider that Being, whoſe agency and providence they were too apt to forget in proſperity. Haughty ſinners are frequently brought by ſuch methods to acknowledge, that there is one greater than they. The proud and ſcornful loſe their arrogance, and attend more than uſual to their ſocial dependences and connections. Even the moſt inconſiderate are forced to own the propriety of thoſe ſentiments, and that conduct by which the religious man is diſtinguiſhed. Few, if any, are ſo inſenſible, as to remain unmoved in times of general calamity. At ſuch times a ſtrong feeling of our dependences and our wants, engageth all to join in the common ſupplications to that Being, who regardeth the crying of his ſervants. To whom indeed can creatures more properly addreſs themſelves, than to their merciful creator?

Children

Children in diſtreſs naturally apply to their parents for relief. God hath implanted in their tender minds an inſtinctive principle, which leads them to *theſe* in preference to *all others*. The ſame Being hath alſo implanted in the parents bowels of pity and compaſſion, ſuſceptible of the ſtrongeſt impreſſions, from the crying and anxiety of their own offſpring. Even brutes he hath made very remarkable, for the moſt affectionate regard to their young. Can he then, who placed theſe tender feelings in the *human* conſtitution, and who hath even beſtowed them on *ſavage beaſts of prey*, be deſtitute of any kind regard which will promote the happineſs of his creatures? He hath manifeſted himſelf our parent, and his offſpring we all are. He hath repreſented himſelf to us under the endearing character of a father, and hath ſhewn forth his paternal tenderneſs in ten thouſand different ways. To whom therefor can we ſo properly fly in diſtreſs, as to him whoſe mercies are boundleſs and never-failing? Nothing leſs than his protection is at any time ſufficient for our ſafety. But ſhould he throw around us the defence of his providence, the aſſaults of all other beings cannot in the leaſt annoy. Their fierceſt malice would be impotent, and their rage rebound on their own heads, to their utter confuſion. Duty, intereſt, inſtinct, every principle in our Souls, lead us to place our entire confidence

dence in God alone, for protection and deliverance. Such was the conduct of the people of *Israel*, when led by calamity to see the folly of expecting deliverance from any but the true God, who made heaven and earth. All other helps frequently failed them. The vanity of all terrestrial supports was plainly manifested. Distresses came thick upon them. Nothing could promise deliverance but the hand of that Being whom they had deserted. To him therefor they again returned; and (as the scripture speaks in cacommodation to our weakness) he repented him of the evil which he thought to do unto them. He turned their *lamentation* into *rejoicing*, and poured his fury on their enemies. Similar to this hath been the experience of our nation very lately. Just before our entrance on the present war, a terrible calamity called aloud for fasting and humiliation. The (a) capital of a kingdom with which we were closely connected, was almost totally destroyed by an earthquake. Some of our people lost their lives in these ruins, and many more suffered greatly in their temporal affairs. At our first entrance on the war we met with many disappointments. A strong (b) fortress, on which we placed great dependance, was shamefully lost.

(a) *Lisbon.*
(b) Fort St. *Philip*'s in the island of *Minorca.*

loſt. The enemies fleets frequently eſcaped the vigilance of thoſe who were ſtationed to annoy them. A mighty (c) armament, long the *boaſt* of our *friends*, and the *terror* of our *foes*, returned without attempting any thing. A pannic ſeized the leading men of a (d) country very cloſely connected with our own, by which means a ſkilful general was obliged, contrary to his own reaſon and inclination, to retreat in ſuch a manner, that a brave army was rendered entirely uſeleſs. The vigilance of the enemy, our ſupineneſs, and afterwards the diſtreſs of our navy by a ſtorm, diſappointed the high expectations we had raiſed of ſeeing an important (e) fortreſs reduced. All our ſchemes in that part of the world were at firſt rendered abortive. Our ſoldiers ſaw places taken, and the moſt ſavage cruelties exerciſed on our people, without being able to afford them any relief. Diſſatisfaction reigned throughout the whole nation. Contentions and quarrels aroſe among our leading men, and inſtead of minding the public affairs, many of thoſe in power were conſulting how beſt to ſecure their own place and penſion. Add to all this, a ſcarcity of the neceſſaries of life, by which means many of our poor endured

(c) The ſecret expedition againſt *Rochfort*.
(d) *Hanover*.
(e) *Louiſbourgh*.

very great hardſhips. Hence aroſe a very melancholy proſpect, at which every lover of his country muſt tremble. Eſpecially every good man muſt be ſtruck with the keeneſt ſorrow, when he reflected, that all theſe calamities were leſs than the nation deſerved. This picture is far from repreſenting the objects in darker colours, than thoſe in which they really appeared. What was our conduct in this ſituation? Public faſts and days of humiliation were appointed. We preſented ourſelves before the LORD, to intercede with him in behalf of our native land. The righteous among us ſincerely offered up ſupplications and prayers to the throne of grace. The inconſiderate, yea, even the profane, aſſumed the appearance of religion. And theſe ſolemn days were obſerved by all ranks, with a great ſhew of ſerioufneſs and real devotion. Our only hope and help we were fully convinced was GOD. Him therefor we promiſed to conſider as our deliverer, if a happy change ſhould take place. Which brings us to the

SECOND obſervation, The reſolutions which men form in diſtreſs of praiſing and rejoicing in GOD, if he ſhould deliver them. Nations labouring under calamity are, in this reſpect, like private perſons. Their ſituation drives them to implore the mercy

mercy of heaven. And it is no wonder, if in ſuch circumſtances they form reſolutions of ſerving God, in the manner which he requires. It is indeed natural to the human mind in diſtreſs, to fly for relief to ſome ſuperior. To none, as we obſerved before, can it more properly apply, than to him, who is infinite in mercy and goodneſs. If his conduct hath been ſuch, as muſt be offenſive in the eyes of a perfectly pure God, the man will be convinced at ſuch a time of its malignity: and conſequently, will then *reſolve* at leaſt to forſake it. Wherein neglect of homage, or a want of properly acknowledging the Divine Being as the author of all his mercies, have been viſible: there he will firmly purpoſe to ſet a peculiarly ſtrong guard, that he may hereafter never forget his bountiful Benefactor, or fail in making him returns of love and reverence. And ſhould heaven be ſo propitious as to hear his prayers, and grant him the deſired deliverance, thankſgiving, veneration, gratitude, piety, the warmeſt devotion, and every divine grace and virtue, flowing from a truly ingenuous mind, and a heart deeply ſenſible of theſe unmerited favours, ſhall diſtinguiſh his happy ſituation. Such are the reſolutions which it is natural for people in diſtreſs to form. Such likewiſe are they which nations enter into, when their circumſtances are ca-

lamitous and afflictive. And without all doubt, ſuch were the purpoſes which thouſands formed in our days of unſucceſsfulneſs. Where they are in general ſincere, there is great reaſon to preſume, the Divine Being will lend a favourable ear to the ſupplications that are joined with them. Should this not be the caſe *immediately*, they will however produce ſome good effects; for they may be a means of cheriſhing in the minds of the ſincere, ſuch virtuous diſpoſitions as will lead them to improve the mercies that remain. A foundation will hereby be laid for receiving the expected deliverance at the moſt proper ſeaſon. With reſpect to themſelves alſo, if through the influence of theſe diſtreſſes habits of goodneſs are formed, or increaſed in their minds, the part they have borne in the general calamity will prove in the higheſt degree beneficial. For though their earthly happineſs ſhould not be promoted, an abundant entrance will hereby be adminiſtered unto them, into that glorious ſtate in heaven, where there ſhall be no more diſtinction of nations, but where the *righteous* from *every part* of the globe, ſhall enjoy perfect and compleat happineſs. We proceed to the

THIRD thing which our text points out: The happy conſequences which flowed from

theſe

theſe national humiliations and prayers. The LORD did that which the people entreated of him. He redeemed *Jacob*, and glorified himſelf in *Iſrael*. Bleſſed indeed is that nation, whom calamity drives to repentance. And peculiarly bleſſed are they, for whom their reformation works out a compleat deliverance. Many times theſe public humiliations and prayers are unattended with ſincerity of heart. The people meet together indeed on theſe ſolemn days, as if they *were* the people of GOD; but their behaviour afterwards ſhews them to be very little the better for performing ſuch ſervices. All their regard to religion vaniſhes, the moment they leave the houſe of GOD; and their manners are equally impure, unjuſt, and profligate, as before. The ſupplications of ſuch are an abomination to the LORD. The reſolutions they form are like the morning cloud, or the early dew, which ſoon paſs away. But when a people meet together, with a deep ſenſe on their minds of the deſtructive nature of ſin; when true compunction of ſpirit ſeizes each one of them, for the part he hath contributed to the public guilt; and when the reſolutions that are formed proceed from ſincerity of heart, and are productive of a reformation among the generality of the nation, their conduct muſt be peculiarly acceptable to the Divine Being, the

the end of his afflictive dispensations is answered, and he will render prosperous that nation, as far as the grand schemes of his providence will permit.

One thing however must be observed, that it is sometimes very difficult to judge with *certainty*, concerning the general character of a nation, from its *good* or *ill* success. Many vices are indeed so detrimental to the public, such as disregard to the national welfare, universal effeminacy, injustice, rapine, or murder, that where these prevail in any *considerable* degree, a community cannot long subsist: especially if engaged in war against a powerful and brave enemy. And on the other hand, some virtues are of that truly beneficial tendency, such as warm and disinterested love of our country, a high sense of honour, an ardent thirst after glory; humanity, justice, fidelity, unanimity, native bravery, hardiness, and a contempt of danger: that in all governments where these have the lead, and the prevailing manners are compounded of such salutary ingredients, there national happiness must prevail, and they may safely defy the attempts of other states, less *virtuous*, and therefor less *powerful*. But in general the manners of a whole people are so variously compounded, and at the same time so changeable, that it is a very hard task for the most accurate observer rightly

rightly to hit off the reſemblance. When this is done, the tendency of ſome cauſes are ſo very uncertain, ſo many things muſt be taken into the account, and the ſecret ſprings lie ſo concealed, that no human penetration or foreſight is ſufficient to determine, what the event muſt be. The reaſon of introducing this obſervation, is to caution us againſt eſteeming *ourſelves* a very *virtuous* and *righteous* people on account of our *proſperity*; and condemning our *enemies*, as the moſt *abandoned* and *depraved* creatures that can exiſt, becauſe of their *unſucceſsfulneſs*. Such a judgment would be raſh and inhuman, unleſs other arguments ſet the matter beyond any reaſonable doubt. We may perhaps be, upon the whole, more virtuous than they, and yet have no great cauſe to boaſt of our goodneſs. If we will draw the compariſon, let us apply it to its proper uſe. From obſerving their vices, and the unhappy conſequences attending them, let us be in the ſtrongeſt manner impelled to cheriſh and diffuſe our own national virtues, and thereby increaſe the public happineſs. For though it muſt be acknowledged, the Divine Being ſometimes pulleth down one nation, and raiſeth up another, for reaſons unknown to us, or rather unfathomable by our ſhallow capacities: yet ſtill the proſperity of a people doth *greatly* depend on the virtue

virtue of individuals; and generally, the moſt *righteous* are the moſt *happy*. There is indeed the greateſt reaſon to believe, that where a regard to God is the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtick of any people, and continues to be ſuch for a conſiderable time, he will honour them with peculiar marks of his favour. In the natural courſe of things, their righteouſneſs tends to exalt them; and as all events are under the Divine Direction, we may ſtrongly conclude, his regard to truth will powerfully incline him ſo to conduct the courſe of affairs, that the communities of the virtuous ſhall enjoy all thoſe advantages, which the preſent mixt ſtate can allow. Sometimes indeed their flow of happineſs may be interrupted, but it ſhall be only to remind them of that Inviſible Being, which through a ſcene of proſperity they are too apt to forget. When their conſideration of his ſuperintendence is properly excited, their ſecurity ſhall be again eſtabliſhed upon the firmeſt foundations.

The hiſtory of all nations confirm this truth: whether we reſpect the *heathens*, or the *jews* who were under the peculiar government of God, he being *their* king in a ſenſe, in which he was not the king of *other* nations. A conſideration of the dealings of providence with kingdoms in paſt ages will lead

lead us to acknowledge, that his bleſſings and favours were poured forth on that people, who were moſt obedient to his will. In theſe latter ages no nation hath been ſo highly diſtinguiſhed as *Britain*. We may hope ſome proper returns have been made to the Divine Being. Iniquities have indeed prevailed much in our land. But bleſſed be God, there were ſome virtues remaining. Virtues, by which this nation was diſtinguiſhed from *others*. Generoſity and public charity were never more conſpicuous than in the preſent age. Humanity, a tender fellow-feeling for thoſe in diſtreſs uſed to be the characteriſtic of a *Briton*. Permit me, my friends, to congratulate you on the pleaſing proſpect; ſome inſtances (a) at this moment ſhew, that the ſpirit of generous tender compaſſion is ſtill active among us; inſtances, the good effects of which, our very enemies will feel; and which muſt make them bluſh, if they have any ſhame left, when ſet in contraſt with their cruelty towards *our* people. There were *formerly*

(a) Referring to private ſubſcriptions for the relief of diſtreſſed *French* priſoners. A ſubſcription of this nature is opened at *Exeter*, and hath met with the moſt *generous* encouragement, by which it is propoſed to relieve a great number of priſoners in that neighborhood, who are almoſt entirely deſtitute of cloathing, by reaſon of their long confinement.

in our nation many pious, religious men, who ſtood in the breach, when deſtruction threatened to overwhelm us. Thanks to a kind Providence, there are *many*, *many* ſuch *ſtill*. May their numbers be every day increaſing. Threatning calamities have indeed frequently hung over our heads, but they were only ſuch as tended to lead us to heaven. For God in a very ſignal manner often interpoſed and ſaved us, when we were on the very brink of deſtruction. Such deliverances it is to be hoped, will ever keep us mindful of the hand from which we received them; and from frequently acknowledging God's kindneſs, engage us to be truly thankful; that ſo the bleſſings of Providence being ſtill continued, our happineſs may be every day more and more encreaſing. Which brings us to the

Fourth thing which we may learn from our text, where the praiſe and glory of all ſhould terminate in God, as the author and giver of all theſe mercies. How abſurd and ungrateful ſhould we eſteem the conduct of that man, who receiving a large bounty from his *friend* by the hand of *a ſervant*, ſhould terminate all his regards *in the ſervant*, without ever conſidering the kindneſs of his *beneficent friend!* Infinitely more abſurd, more unreaſonable would be the conduct of a peo-

a people, who receiving remarkable deliverances, confine their regards to *second* causes, without ever raising their attention to the *first* cause and original source of all blessings. We *Britons* shall be in an especial manner guilty of the blackest ingratitude, if *we* forget or overlook the hand of God in our national deliverances. Let us call to mind our past vows and promises. Let us recollect the resolutions we formed, when we met together to supplicate heaven. Surely we cannot have forgot them already. We then promised, did we not? We *all* purposed reformation, and promised, if God would disappoint our fears and restore our national happiness, we would acknowledge him as the sole author and original source of all our successes. The conduct of Providence made it appear by several of our distresses, that there was an invisible hand, which was to be regarded in sending them. Witness the defeat of our first expedition in *America*; (a) where such a pannic seized those troops, who had but the moment before dispersed their enemies, that they destroyed their baggage, and fled over a large track of land with the utmost precipitation. Witness also the want of *harmony* in those colonies, whose very existence depended on

(a) Under General *Braddock*.

bravely and *unanimouſly* exerting themſelves. Witneſs the diſtreſs of our fleets by a ſtorm, and the unaccountable and unexpected inactivity of our long boaſted armament. Second cauſes may indeed be conſidered as *immediately* producing theſe effects. But they are ſuch kinds of *ſecond* cauſes, ſo unexpected, as lead us very powerfully to the conſideration of the *firſt* cauſe. We were very ſenſible at that time, the hand of heaven ſeemed againſt us. The general cry was, that our iniquities had provoked the Divine Being to deſert our cauſe, that we were verging faſt towards ruin, and nothing ſhort of *Omnipotence* itſelf could work out our deliverance. It would therefor be the higheſt degree of preſumptuous folly, ſuch ſhameful ingratitude as would caſt an eternal reproach on our country, to overlook the Divine Being NOW, when we are not only delivered from *ruin*, but when our enemies are in a great degree *humbled*.

The train of our ſucceſſes through the preſent year hath been unparallel'd, ſome of them quite unexpected and amazing. Our enemies have fled before us both by ſea and by land. It is not in *one* place only that we have conquered, but *every part of the globe* hath been witneſs to our *glory*, and their *ſhameful behaviour*. Their own generals have owned the *bravery* and *intrepidity* of *our* troops,

troops, and confeſſed the *cowardice* of their *own*. Who, the moſt ſanguine among us, could have thought it? A mere handful (a) of *Britons*, joined with an inconſiderable number of our allies, routed, and almoſt entirely diſperſed, a whole army of thoſe, who had long and loudly boaſted of their military ſkill, their bravery, and their numbers. What endued our troops with ſuch courage, that when near one fourth part of their whole number were either wounded or ſlain, they ſtill remained unmoved and dauntleſs, and at laſt glorioufly defeated the multitude of their oppoſers? Unleſs they had been ſupported by an inviſible power, and ſtrengthened by an omnipotent arm, to all human appearance they muſt have given way. Eſpecially if we add one circumſtance attending that victory; the inactivity of a part of the army: by which means theſe brave ſoldiers were expoſed to the whole fury of their enemies. If ever courage was nobly exerted, if ever an interpoſition of Providence can be traced out, the preſent caſe was ſurely an inſtance. To which let us add, that it happened at a time the moſt critical, a time the moſt unexpected; ſo unexpected indeed, that it could not at firſt gain credit. This was the very part in which we moſt feared. When

(a) At the battle of *Thornhauſen*.

When the account of a victory so opportune, so unexpected, and at the same time so amazing, was brought, we may truly say, we were like them that dreamed. It hath indeed been publicly owned, in writings not purposely dedicated to the service of religion, that the present war hath afforded as many, if not more instances of an interposition of Providence, than any ever recorded in history. To mention them all, and severally point out the circumstances which shew it, would take up too much of your time: they are indeed conspicuous without enumeration, evident without a comment. Let us therefor hasten to that last and signal (a) victory, where our enemies have received such a blow as they will scarce recover for ages. Here every circumstance rendered our success improbable to a very high degree. Permit me to mention one thing, of which there are few examples in history. The enemies troops were much superior in number to those who were sent to besiege them: they had also very great advantages from the situation and natural strength of the place: their general wisely improved these circumstances, and depended not so much on the *bravery* of his troops, as on the *inaccessibleness* of their *intrenchments*: it being deemed next to an impossibility for our

(a) At *Quebec*.

our people to approach them. Yet under all these disadvantages, and even after being once baffled, our officers and troops, though they were very far from being *sanguine* in their expectations, still retained their courage; and bravely marched on to glory and compleat victory, under the conduct of a *youthful* leader.

These considerations seem clearly to prove, that the power which steeled their breasts, and nerved their arms, was divine. Not that he is to be overlooked, whose matchless skill at first planned, and whose indefatigable diligence, and unconquerable intrepidity, at length happily compleated the scheme. Would to God he had survived the conquest, that he might have received from his grateful country, those tributes of praise and honour which he so richly deserved. His fall was in the highest sense *glorious* and *triumphant*, rather the object of *envy* than *compassion*. Let us reverence his memory, and ever extol his patriotism and bravery. May his name and his virtues be handed down to posterity, as an example for unborn generations of *Britons* to imitate. Let his worthy companions in this glorious enterprize, receive those praises to which their merit so justly entitles them, for intrepidly executing his plan, and wisely improving every advantage, when their leader was no more. That unanimity

nimity of all, in their ſeveral ſtations, which was ſo conſpicuous throughout every part of the undertaking, deſerves the higheſt commendation. It ought ever to be had in remembrance: becauſe, under God, it will have a very powerful tendency to ſecure the happineſs of that people where it prevails. Though theſe honours ought to be paid to the memory of the *dead*, and the merits of the *living*, yet let us not reſt here; but let our ultimate praiſes aſcend to that Being, who preſiding over the affairs of the univerſe, hath ſtiled himſelf the giver of victory, and the God of armies. *Happy Britain*, who art in ſuch a ſituation! *Happy* in domeſtic peace and plenty. While others feel the devaſtations of war, or the rage of mercileſs armies, we may every one enjoy the fruit of his own labour in ſecurity. No inteſtine commotions, nor foreign ravages to deprive us of thoſe neceſſaries, which we have in ſo great profuſion. For the Divine Being, to add ſtill farther to our happineſs, hath the laſt year given us an *uncommonly plentiful* harveſt; loading our fields with thoſe bleſſings which may make the poor ſing for joy, and diſperſe from the face of every inhabitant all melancholy and gloom. The happy *conjunction* of all theſe mercies, *each one* of which calls aloud for praiſe and gratitude, muſt ſurely raiſe our thankfulneſs to the

higheſt

highest pitch, and animate all our devotions. Which leads to the

FIFTH and last thing to be considered: viz. the joyful effects, the exultation and triumph which the contemplation of so many mercies should produce in our minds, engaging us to pay our most grateful acknowledgments to GOD, as the author of them all; and to summon all around us to join in the same delightful service. The words in our text are, *Sing O ye heavens, shout ye lower parts of the earth, break forth into singing ye mountains, thou forest, and every tree therein.* The prophet with a noble and divine enthusiasm, summons even things inanimate to join in the general chorus. He would be unworthy the name of a *Briton*, peculiarly unworthy the favours by which a *Briton* is at present distinguished, who feels no emotion of joy at the recital of these mercies, or refused to ascribe the glory of all, where it is so justly due. Few, if any such, can be supposed to be in our land: they are indeed monsters in nature. Such men must act contrary to every principle of humanity, and are not only destitute of love to their *country*, but even blind to their *own interest*. It is paying

ing no great compliment then, to ſuppoſe there are no ſuch here. Indeed the outward expreſſions of joy, the overflowings of a tumultuous paſſion, are quickly ſhewn in the conduct of every individual, when a train of national ſucceſſes affords any room for ſuch indulgencies. But the exultation, the thankſgiving, which is here intended, differs widely from the confuſion and madneſs, which are viſible in the looks and geſtures of a rejoicing mob. Permit me to give a few directions on this head, with which the ſubject ſhall be concluded.

1. Aſcribe the praiſe of all to God. This is reaſonable in all ſucceſs, and on every occaſion of thankfulneſs. For the Divine Being is the author of all our mercies, and the giver of every good, and every perfect gift. But our preſent ſucceſſes, and the bleſſings which we are this day met together to commemorate, in an eſpecial manner demand this tribute from us: becauſe the hand of heaven is very conſpicuous in bringing them about. This hath been largely inſiſted on under the former head.

2. Indulge no inſulting language againſt our enemies, or any vain and arrogant boaſts. Such conduct is beneath *Britons*, whoſe

whoſe national character ever hath been, and God grant it may ever continue to be, *a generous, humane enemy*, whoſe courage is better ſhewn by their *actions*, than their *words*. Particularly, let no *inſult*, but rather *pity*, be ſhewn towards thoſe unhappy perſons, who are our captives. Let us remember, though they are enemies in a national view, they are ſtill men: have the ſame feelings, the ſame paſſions, and the ſame wants, with ourſelves; and are children of the ſame father. Their condition is unhappy enough, in being abſent from their country and their friends, without having it encreaſed by any inſults or reproaches. Perhaps tender parents, a loving wife, or motherleſs children, may be weeping their abſence, and ſending up their cries to heaven, to pity their diſtreſſes. Let us be that to them which theſe pray for. Nothing can be more divine, more godlike, than to diſpenſe bleſſings to our enemies. Such conduct is indeed truly *chriſtian*. It is a copy of him, who was the moſt perfect pattern of benevolence, that ever appeared in the world. Think, O think, on the heavenly pleaſure which muſt fill our breaſts, from reflecting, that even our very *enemies* pray for our welfare. It is a duty highly incumbent on

us, to make their captivity as light as poſſible, by exerciſing towards them every kind office, and benevolent affection, which we could wiſh for in the ſame ſituation. And though, for political reaſons, it is neceſſary they ſhould be confined, yet their treatment ought to be humane. I have congratulated my country, and do again congratulate it, on that ſpirit of liberality which ſo generouſly ſhews itſelf, in contributing towards the cloathing thoſe of our enemies, who, by reaſon of their long confinement, are almoſt naked. This is a very proper method of ſhewing ourſelves worthy the favours of heaven. This is one of thoſe exerciſes of benevolence, which Chriſt, in his deſcription of the final judgment, particularly commends. The pleaſure, which the bare recollection of ſuch a deed affords at *preſent*, is a moſt delightful fortaſte of that glory which ſhall be its *future* reward. Every one then, who is endowed with the tender feelings of compaſſion, will contribute as far as is in his power, to the helping forward ſo diſintereſted and humane a charity.

3. Amidſt all our joy for our preſent happineſs, let us keep a humble, dependent frame of mind. That man, as well as

as that nation, would be poſſeſſed of a glorious character, concerning whom it could be with truth affirmed, that in adverſity they were unbroken, and full of hope, and in proſperity they were cautious and humble. Such a temper of mind is that deſirable medium, which promotes the true happineſs of its poſſeſſor. Though our enemies are very much humbled before us, they are not entirely ſubdued. We have indeed ſufficient reaſon for engaging *thoſe* with courage and reſolution, who have ſo often fled. Let us not deſpiſe them, but act with *caution* and *prudence*, at the ſame time that we act with *ſpirit*. This is the moſt likely method, to force them to that juſt and honourable peace which we have always deſired, and ought ever to keep in view. The obtaining this ſhould animate all our endeavours, and is the only end that can juſtify the deſolations of war.

4. Let us endeavour that theſe mercies, and theſe demonſtrations of joy, impreſs more deeply on our minds the neceſſity of obedience to God. This is the end of all the divine diſpenſations, whether *afflictive* or *proſperous*. Where this valuable end is anſwered, outward advantages are indeed effectual bleſſings. Let us

ſerve

in our breaſts. Let purity of manners, and a ſtrong ſenſe of the obligations of religion, be not only cheriſhed in *ourſelves*, but ſpread among *all* over whom we have any influence. If ſuch principles prevail, and become general, we ſhall be a nation as glorious as we are at preſent ſucceſsful. A large ſtream of happineſs will then flow on without mixture or interruption, from which millions yet unborn may draw the moſt delightful and reviving cordials.

THE END.

BRITAIN's HAPPINESS,

AND

The PROPER IMPROVEMENT of it,

REPRESENTED IN A

SERMON,

Preach'd

At NEWINGTON-GREEN, *Middlesex*,

On Nov. 29. 1759.

Being the Day appointed for a

GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

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M DCC LIX.

Pſal. CXLVII. 20.

He hath not dealt ſo with any nation: And as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praiſe ye the Lord.

THIS Pſalm contains a warm exhortation, addreſt to the Jewiſh people, to praiſe God for the bleſſings and benefits which he had conferred upon them.

Praiſe the Lord, for it is good to ſing praiſes unto our God, and praiſe is comely.

Praiſe the Lord, O Jeruſalem. Praiſe thy God, O Zion. For he hath ſtrengthened the bars of thy gates.

He hath bleſſed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders and filleth thee with the fineſt of the wheat. He ſheweth his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and his judgments unto Iſrael. He hath not dealt ſo with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praiſe ye the Lord.

The whole of this paſſage is applicable, with great propriety, to this Kingdom on the preſent occaſion. We have like reaſons for joy and thanksgiving, and may now take up theſe words

and ſay; *Praiſe thy God, Oh Britain! For he hath ſtrengthen'd the bars of thy gates. He hath bleſſed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders and filleth thee with the fineſt of the wheat. He hath ſhewed his word unto thee, his ſtatutes and his judgments. He hath not dealt ſo with any nation, and as for his judgments they have not known them. Praiſe ye the Lord.*

My preſent deſign is I. To ſhew you how happily we are diſtinguiſh'd as a nation. And

II. What effects the conſideration of our peculiar happineſs ought to have upon us.

In ſpeaking on the former of theſe heads, the circumſtance I ſhall firſt mention is our ſituation as an Iſland, by which our internal peace and tranquillity are ſecured.

Nothing can be more affecting than to think of the diſmal State of many of the countries about us, where the noiſe and tumults of war fill every ear, where powerful armies march in dreadful pomp ſpreading devaſtation around them, and numberleſs innocent perſons are driven from their houſes and families and all that is dear to them. In thoſe countries garments are continually rolled in blood, and none can enjoy any thing in comfort or ſecurity. They live in perpetual terror. *They plant vineyards, without knowing who ſhall eat the fruit thereof. They carry ſeed into the field, without knowing who ſhall gather in the harveſt*, and their

their wives and their children and themſelves often fall a prey to relentleſs inſult and cruelty.

But we are exempted from all theſe miſeries. *We can ſit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, and no one maketh us afraid.* As long as we agree among ourſelves, it is ſcarcely poſſible that we ſhould become the ſeat of war. The Ocean is our wall of defenſe, which guards us on all ſides, and cuts off our communication with the neighbouring nations, ſo that no hoſtile feet or deſtroying armies can eaſily alarm our borders. We live in the quiet and full poſſeſſion of all our properties and bleſſings, without being in any danger from the inroads of enemies or the depredations of lawleſs ſavages. We *hear* indeed of the dreadful calamities and deſolations of war, but we only *hear* of them. We neither *feel* nor *ſee* them. And ſo little is the difference between the ſtate of moſt of us now, and what it was before the commencement of war, that, was it not for the accounts we read and the reports convey'd to us, we ſhould ſcarcely know that we are engaged in war.

How great a privilege is this? How diſtinguiſhingly happy are we to poſſeſs thus, among contending nations and in the midſt of deſolation and bloodſhed, tranquillity and ſecurity and almoſt all the enjoyments and ſweets of peace?

2dly Another part of our peculiar happineſs, as a nation, is the plenty and opulence we enjoy. God has given us the appointed weeks of har-

veſt. He has ſatisfied our poor with bread, and crowned our ſeaſons with his goodneſs. We want nothing that can contribute to make us eaſy and happy. All the conveniencies and even the elegancies of life are poured upon us in the greateſt profuſion. Such plenty have we, that we help to feed and cloath other nations. Such is our opulence, that there is not a kingdom upon earth which can in this reſpect be compared with us. Notwithſtanding all the drains of war, we feel no very ſenſible ſcarcity of any kind. Our wealth increaſes continually; and it may be queſtioned whether any nation ever raiſed, with ſo much eaſe, ſuch large expences as have been laid out by this nation in the preſent war. Our commerce is extended from one end of the earth to the other. Our naval force is unrivaled. Our enemies dare not ſhew themſelves before our Fleets; and we are acknowledg'd by all the world as the Sovereigns of the Sea.

But there is a ſtill higher inſtance of our diſtinguiſh'd happineſs to be mentioned; I mean the LIBERTY we are bleſſed with. There is no country where this is enjoy'd in ſuch extent and perfection. The greateſt part of the reſt of mankind are *ſlaves*. They are ſubject to arbitrary and inſolent maſters, who ſay to them bow down before us that we may go over you, and who have their properties and lives entirely at their mercy. How melancholy a ſituation muſt

this

this be; and how disgraceful to human nature is it, that men should be capable of enduring such encroachments on their natural rights; or that, in so many countries, such slavish forms of government should take place, human beings descend, by hereditary right, like beasts, from one tyrant to another, and the will of, perhaps, the most silly and contemptible creature in a nation, be established as its supreme guide and law?

But our case is totally different. While other nations groan under slavery, we rejoyce in the possession of liberty and independency. Our rights and properties are, in general, secured to us beyond the possibility of violation. Every man among us can enjoy the fruits of his industry without restraint or disturbance. We can have no burdens laid upon us without our own consent, and the laws by which we are governed are not such as a senseless tyrant may please to appoint, but such as we ourselves by our representatives concur in making. The meanest of our fellow-subjects cannot have the least injury done him without being able to find redress. No life can be taken away, or any punishment inflicted on any one, without a fair and equitable trial. The King himself has not power to touch the person, to seize any part of the property, or to make the smallest infringement on the liberty, of any one man in his dominions.

But our *Religious Liberty* is the crown of all our national advantages. There are other na-

tions, who enjoy *civil* Liberty as well as we, tho perhaps not ſo completely. But with reſpect to Religious liberty we are almoſt ſingular and unparalleled.

In other countries not only the *lives* and *fortune*, but the *ſouls* and *conſciences* of men are ſubject to the abſolute will of their governors. In thoſe countries a perſon dare not ſpeak his mind about religious matters, or avow any opinions different from thoſe commonly received, without expoſing himſelf to the greateſt dangers. Nothing, ſurely, can be more diſmal than for men to have their *minds* thus ſhackled, to be oblig'd to receive without examination the deciſions of ignorant pretenders to ſpiritual authority, or to be deprived of a liberty which is the very laſt thing a wiſe man would conſent to part with, I mean, that of worſhiping God according to his conſcience, and of profeſſing thoſe principles of religion, which he thinks, come neareſt to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel.

If it is a diſgrace to human nature, as I have obſerved before, that men ſhould be capable of enduring *civil ſlavery*, how much more ignominious and daſtardly is it to ſuffer themſelves to be inſlaved in religious matters, or to follow blindly the direction of earthly maſters in things that concern their everlaſting ſalvation?

But we, Brethren, are unſpeakably happier. We ſee the ſhameful folly of this. The Principles of Liberty have been thoroughly explained and are now generally underſtood and embraced among

ıong us. We well know that Chriſt is the only aw-giver of Chriſtians, that there can be no ıch thing as human authority in religious mat-rs, and that the office of the Magiſtrate is not interpoſe in any religious differences, but to eep the peace, to ſecure the civil rights of ıen, and to protect and encourage all good ıbjects of all ſects and perſuaſions. In this ıtion every one may judge for himſelf, and act greeably to his judgment, without moleſtation fear. A free and publick diſcuſſion is allowed all points, even ſuch as in other nations it ould be impriſonment or death to diſcover any oubts about. All Sects enjoy the benefit of leration, and may worſhip God in whatever ay they think moſt acceptable to him; and othing expoſes any perſon to civil penalties or enſures, but overt acts inconſiſtent with the eace and ſecurity of ſociety. The reſearches f learned men among us have been puſhed far-ıer than ever they were in any nation. An bſolute and unbounded ſcope is given to en-uiries of all kinds; and the conſequence of this as been, that the greateſt improvements have een made in all the ſciences, and that we are ow become the Fountain-head of knowledge, nd the Inſtructors of the world.

Religious knowledge, I think, in particular wes more to us that to all the world beſides. t would be wonderful indeed if it did not, conſi-ering our diſtinctions in other reſpects. Chriſ-anity has been cleared among us of a great

eal

deal of that ſhocking rubbiſh, which has been thrown upon it by Popery. And, perhaps, there never was a time, ſince that of the Apoſtles, in which the nature and deſign of the Goſpel were ſo well underſtood, and its evidences and excellency ſo well explained, as in the preſent age and kingdom.

Bleſſed are our eyes, for they ſee, while thoſe of others are ſhut. Bleſſed are our minds, for they are free, while thoſe of others are fetter'd and enſlaved. Here light and knowledge prevail, and from hence the arts and ſciences diffuſe their influence, and are propagated to the nations around us. In this Iſland peace and liberty have fixed their abode, and from hence ſuperſtition, perſecution, and ſlavery are fled, while in other nations they ſtill remain to confound and terrify and oppreſs the ſouls of men.

How is it poſſible to reflect on theſe things without joy and exultation? How happy is it for us that our lot has been caſt in ſuch a land? A land favoured with ſo many invaluable privileges and advantages. A land where peace, plenty, knowledge and liberty abound and flouriſh. A land which has the beſt conſtitution of government, the beſt laws, the beſt King and the beſt religion in the world.

To this account of our happineſs I ſhall add once more, that we have among us many perſons of characters eminent for virtue and piety founded upon rational principles. I wiſh however I had more to ſay on this head. It muſt be

e acknowledg'd that our improvements in good-
eſs have by no means been proportionable to
hoſe which we have made in other reſpects.
But tho' this is true; yet, without doubt,
here are in this kingdom many truly worthy
nd good men; and were they to be col-
ected together from the different perſuaſions
f Chriſtians among us, they would, what-
ver they might be in compariſon with the reſt
f the nation, appear, I imagine, a great mul-
itude. Theſe are, indeed, the flowers of the
ation. They are the cauſe of all its happineſs
nd its chief glory. Were theſe taken away,
s whole beauty would be deſtroy'd, its proſpe-
ity would be blaſted, and immediate ruin would
vertake it. That we have then any conſidera-
le number of theſe in the nation muſt be mat-
r of great conſolation to us, and it ought to be
ur whole ſtudy and buſineſs to add to this
umber by at leaſt adding *ourſelves* to it.

To ſay no more here: One branch of virtue
t leaſt there is which ſhines with peculiar luſtre
mong us. Our charities exceed all that ever
as known in any kingdom. And tho' there is
mong us a prodigious rabble of looſe and irre-
igious perſons, yet I cannot but hope and pre-
ume, that there is not a ſpot on earth of equal
ize which has an equal number of good per-
ons in it, or where there are ſo many who un-
lerſtand ſo well what true religion is, and who
o uniformly and ſteddily practiſe it.

What

What I have hitherto ſaid, contains chiefly an account of ſuch particulars of our happineſs as conſtitute what ſeems to be our permanent and ſettled ſtate as a nation, and what has been its ſtate for a courſe of many years.

But there are ſome particulars to be added which relate peculiarly to the preſent time, and which, on this occaſion, it would be inexcuſable not to remember. During the courſe of this year, this happy and memorable year, you all know what occaſions of joy we have met with, and what additions have been made to our glory.

The tumults of party ſeem to be laid aſleep among us; and God grant they may never wake more. Scarcely one murmur is there to be heard any where. Our counſels have been wiſe, our meaſures vigorous and our enterprizes ſucceſsful. Our Navy and our Army have gained the higheſt honour by their unanimity and bravery. Our enemies have been taught to fear and to feel our ſuperiority. They have fled before us every where. They have been conquer'd by ſea and by land, and in all the quarters of the world. Their towns, their ſhips and their fortreſſes have been deliver'd up into our hands; and we now appear among the nations great, rich, proſperous and formidable, whilſt they appear mean and wretched, and are impoveriſhed, diſtracted and confounded. With the utmoſt propriety, therefore, may we on this joyful

joyful day adopt the words of my text, and ſay; *Surely God hath not dealt ſo with any nation.*

One circumſtance, indeed, there is, relating to our late ſucceſſes and victories, which cannot but deeply affect our minds. They have coſt us ſome of the beſt blood that was ever ſhed. When we think of thoſe brave men who have ſacrificed their lives in our defence, all the ſprings of grateful anguiſh muſt be opened within us, and it becomes almoſt impoſſible to avoid mingling tears with the joy of this day. ——— But, my Brethren and Countrymen, amidſt the concern we muſt feel on this account, let us remember how glorioufly they have fallen, and that they are more the objects of envy than lamentation. Their example, we may expect, will kindle courage in others, and their ſpirit be transfus'd into thouſands who will emulate their virtues and aſpire to their glory. There ought not indeed to be one perſon in this nation, whoſe heart does not glow with this emulation, and who does not earneſtly wiſh, that he could die the ſame death, and that his latter end might be like theirs. How much better is it to expire thus in a blaze of glory earn'd by virtue, and to go down to the grave follow'd by the acclamations and the tears of a nation, than to drag a worthleſs life beneath univerſal contempt and infamy?

Having now repreſented to you our happineſs as a nation, it is proper that I ſhould next endeavour

deavour to ſhew you what improvement we ought to make of it, or what effects the conſideration of it ſhould have upon us.

In the firſt place, it muſt be very obvious that we ought to be thankful for our happineſs. We ought to have a deep ſenſe of it upon our hearts, and to praiſe God for aſſigning us our paſſage thro' life in ſuch a country, and bleſſing it with ſo many mercies and advantages.

'Tis to God we owe all that makes us happy. 'Tis he that bringeth down one nation, and that exalteth another. 'Tis from him that all the diſtinctions among the communities, as well as the individuals of mankind, are derived. All events are ſubject to his ſuperintendency, *and he doth whatſoever he pleaſeth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.* We ought therefore, in all circumſtances, to acknowledge and adore his hand. We ought to aſcribe all our ſucceſſes to his goodneſs, and, with grateful hearts, to direct our regards to his providence, and to fix our dependence upon his favour, as the original ſources of all proſperity and bliſs. So diſtinguiſhing and invaluable are our national privileges, that it is not poſſible for us to be thankful enough for them; and miſerably baſe and diſingenuous would it be in us to diſcover in ſuch happy circumſtances no thankful emotions, or, amidſt ſuch a profuſion of bleſſings, to forget and neglect the ſupreme Author of all bleſſings. There are, I believe, many among us who are capable of this deteſtable impiety

and

and profaneneſs; and it cannot but give every good man great pain to think of their characters; or to obſerve that inattention to providence, and that readineſs to aſcribe all our advantages to our own merit, without any thought of the Deity, which prevail among us. It is with the greateſt pleaſure that I can obſerve to you here, that we have had a better example ſet us from the throne, which has been ſince follow'd in both houſes of Parliament. May the influence of ſo noble an example extend itſelf every where, and be communicated to every heart in the nation. There are indeed, in the ſucceſſes we have lately met with, ſo many appearances of a providential diſpoſal of things in our favour, as one would think ſufficient to kindle devotion in the coldeſt breaſt, and to extort acknowledgment and praiſe from the moſt blind and atheiſtical. In all events we ought to look higher than ſecond cauſes, but in caſes, where the fate of nations is concern'd, to aſcribe events (of ſo ſtriking a kind eſpecially as thoſe we this day celebrate) to human agency merely, would ſhew an inſenſibility and ignorance of the moſt ſhocking nature. Let us ſtudy carefully to avoid ſuch guilt; and, while we honour and admire the inſtruments of our happineſs, let us remember that they are no more than the inſtruments of it, and that our thoughts ought always to be directed primarily and chiefly to that Almighty Being who is the cauſe of all

cauſes,

cauſes, the ruler of all events, and the *giver of every good and perfect gift.*

The antient heathens thought they did the greateſt honour to their Heroes and Warriors, when they repreſented them as favour'd of heaven, and indebted to ſuperior power for their ſucceſſes.

The Pſalmiſt, after mentioning in my text the peculiar happineſs of the Jewiſh nation, adds immediately, *Praiſe ye the Lord.* No exhortation could be more properly added. We have as much reaſon to praiſe the Lord as the Jews had. We ſeem to be, as they were, his peculiar and favourite people; and nothing can be more fit than that, with joy and triumph, we ſhould *magnify his holy name.*

2dly. The peculiar happineſs we enjoy ought to lead us to the general practiſe of virtue and religion. This, above all things, ought to be the effect of God's goodneſs to us. The unſpeakable riches of his forbearance and love ſhould engage us to amend our evil ways, and to fear and obey him. We ſhall ſhew the moſt ſhameful perverſeneſs, if we convert the benefits he heaps upon us into inſtruments of rebellion againſt him, or make the plenty and the liberty with which he diſtinguiſhes us, the occaſions of luxury and licentiouſneſs.

We are now, God be praiſed, a great, a free and powerful people. As far as we have among us any principles of true ingenuity, the conſideration of this will make us ambitious to

ſhew

ſhew ourſelves worthy of our advantages by our integrity, humanity, and piety. The continuance of our happineſs depends entirely on the practiſe of righteouſneſs among us. It is this alone that exalteth a nation, and that can maintain its dignity and ſuperiority. If our remarkable ſucceſſes produce no other effect than to increaſe irreligion among us, or to make us more proud and wanton, and mad after pleaſure; then may we well fear, that our glory will be ſoon laid in the duſt, and our enemies, now under our feet, raiſed up to humble and chaſtiſe us. Let then every one of us labour to the greateſt extent of his power to practiſe virtue himſelf, and to promote it in others. Thus ſhall we be the means of ſtrengthening in the beſt manner the foundations of our publick happineſs, and do the greateſt ſervice to our country. Nothing need give us the leaſt pain about this kingdom, except the vice and irreligion which prevail in it. Every vicious man is a canker at the root of our happineſs, and a curſe to his country. Sin, without doubt, is the worſt enemy a nation can have; and our ſins are peculiarly aggravated by being committed in a land bleſt with ſuch light as ours enjoys. But, yet, we find that heaven ſmiles upon us, and that we are happy beyond example. What then ſhould we be, and how ſhould we be favoured, did publick virtue prevail among us in proportion to our ſucceſſes and advantages?

3dly. A ſenſe of our peculiar happineſs ought to engage us to endeavour to eſtabliſh and improve it. After advancing ſo far, it will be inexcuſable to ſtop ſhort, or to neglect doing our utmoſt to puſh things to that point of perfection, which we have brought ſo nearly within our reach. Our glory is great. How ambitious ſhould we be to place it above all danger, and to wipe off from it every ſtain? Is it not too ſadly notorious, and has it not been often lamented by the wiſeſt and beſt men amongſt us; that, in our conſtitution, both civil and eccleſiaſtical, there are many particulars, which greatly want amendment, and ſome of which are inconſiſtent with that liberty, which is the chief ſubject of our boaſt and triumph, and really a ſcandal to a great and wiſe people?

It would be very eaſy to give a particular recital of theſe, and to mention many alterations and amendments, which would make us greater and happier. What an addition, for inſtance, to our ſtrength and riches would be produced by encouraging foreign Proteſtants to ſettle among us? What a dreadful load of prevarication and perjury, which overwhelms the integrity, and deſtroys the ſouls of multitudes about us, might be taken off by aboliſhing all uſeleſs teſts and leſſening the number of oaths? At the time that our preſent religious eſtabliſhment was made, the nation was but juſt emerging from Popery. Is it poſſible then, that it ſhould be entirely agreeable to the purity

rity of the Christian doctrine and worship, or that it should want no review in order to secure its safety, and adapt it to a more improved and enlighten'd age *?

But I will not enlarge here, lest I should offend any worthy men, and deviate into what would be inconsistent with the design of this day.

Were those alterations and amendments made effectually but willingly, which almost every body now sees to be necessary, and which, as generous sentiments spread, are daily growing more and more necessary; and were we likewise heartily to love one another amidst our religious differences, and to study above all things to imbibe the spirit and to obey the precepts of our holy religion, nothing would be wanting to raise us to the highest pitch of grandeur and prosperity, and to make us the pride and wonder of the earth.

* "In short, all the serious, intelligent and well inclined "people of the church of England, wish there was something "more and better to be done than is done. And they lament "our continuing so long in a state of inactivity, to the grow-"ing detriment of the church. May our Governors in church "and state take this into consideration! and may it be timely "done; lest future remedies, being out of time, should prove "to be of no avail!" Vid. Free and Candid Disquisitions, Preface p. 8.

"It is in vain we hope to suport our church on the ruins of "Christianity; or ever expect to see it flourish, when we ad-"mit or retain any thing in its constitution, which is inconsistent "with the great design and exalted genius of that religion; or "which may be any ways obstructive of its free course and des-"tined progress." Ib. Introduction, p. 8.

In the mean time, however, it is, I think, our duty, as private men, to do what we can towards removing those offences which dishonour our country, by declaring our sentiments about them, on all proper occasions, with modesty and humility; by never complying in any instance contrary to our sentiments; and giving, as far as possible, a publick testimony in favour of universal Liberty and the simplicity of the Gospel. As long as wise men will not do this, or indulge timidity and indolence, it is certain, that corruptions must continue, and that no alterations or improvements can ever be expected. Had the primitive Christians, or the first reformers, acted thus, neither Christianity nor the reformation would ever have taken in the world.

4thly. The consideration of our unparallel'd happiness should engage us to do every thing in our power, to preserve and defend it against all dangerous attacks. Who would not exert himself to the utmost in such a cause? Who would not sooner sacrifice every thing in the world than part with so much bliss? What shame ought to confound that man who, in such a country, can entertain one factious thought, or discover the least reluctance in contributing his part towards its support?

How do I wish that, on this occasion, I had a voice which could reach and penetrate the hearts of all my countrymen, that I might make them more deeply sensible of their unspeakable

ſpeakable happineſs, and convince them effectually that there never was a people, who had ſo much reaſon to ſhew themſelves valiant; that I might inſpire them with the moſt ardent gratitude to the Author of all good for their bleſſings, and engage them to pray continually for the peace of our Jeruſalem, to forget private intereſt and party prejudices in zeal for virtue and their country, and to concur, as one man, in ſtriving to exalt this nation to the higheſt, and to make it an example of all that is great and excellent!

We are engag'd in a moſt important and deciſive war. Upon the iſſue of it depends, in a great meaſure, all that is valuable to us, and the ſtate of Europe, perhaps, for many ages to come. Let us, joyfully, give every aid poſſible towards making it ſucceſsful, and towards humbling that cruel and faithleſs nation, which has ſo long been the plague of Europe, and in whoſe weakneſs our only ſecurity lies: Remembring that we have *every thing* to fight for, they *nothing* except their breaden God and their chains; and that the conſequence of our being conquer'd by them would be our ſinking into the loweſt infamy, our becoming, what they are, ignoble and miſerable ſlaves, and the prevalency once more among us of that religion which would cruſh all our liberties and privileges, which would teach us to cut one another's throats in order to do God ſervice, and which is the ſhame and the ſcourge of mankind. —— Oh! frightful proſpect! Can any

Britiſh

British heart bear to view it with patience ?——
But, thanks be to God, there seems at present no danger of any such event. We are the bulwark of the Protestant interest in the world, and this is an interest which, we may hope, God will not forsake. We have been hitherto wonderfully prosper'd; and we have shewn our enemies what they may expect, if they go on to contend with us. This year will always shine among the brightest in our Annals. Never, never was *Britain* so glorious.

But, let us not be too much elated. The struggle is not yet over, and the issues of war are still uncertain. 'Tis *possible* that we may lose the advantages we have gain'd, and our joy and triumph be suddenly chang'd to misery and despair. Let us then rejoyce with trembling, and suppress carefully in ourselves all vain confidence, placing our chief trust in God, and discovering, in all events, that regard to the common welfare of mankind and those equitable, reasonable, and pious dispositions, which are the best proofs of true magnanimity, and the best means of securing the continuance of the divine protection.

Lastly. The account, which has been given of the happy state of this nation, may lead our thoughts to that time when the whole world shall enjoy the like happiness. The scriptures, I think, give us abundant reason to expect such a time; a time when Popish darkness

neſs and oppreſſion ſhall be ſucceeded by univerſal Peace and Liberty, *and nation no more lift up a ſword againſt nation*; when the everlaſting Goſpel in its native purity ſhall prevail thro' the whole earth, and the *kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt.*

The invention of printing follow'd by the reformation and the revival of Literature; the free communication which has been open'd between the different parts of the world, and the late amazing improvements in knowledge of every kind, have remarkably prepared the way for this joyful period. The world is now advanced far beyond its infancy. There are many indications of an approaching general amendment in human affairs. The ſeaſon fixed by prophecy for the deſtruction of the *man of ſin* cannot be far diſtant, and the glorious light of *the latter days* ſeems to be now dawning upon mankind from this happy Iſland.

Nothing can be more pleaſing than to indulge ſuch views and hopes; and it ſhould be a great encouragement, to thoſe who have eſpouſed the principles of liberty, and who ſtand up againſt antichriſtian uſurpations and corruptions, to conſider, that it is by ſuch principles this period is likely to be introduced, and that, in the end, they muſt prevail over all oppoſition. This ſhould engage them to adhere ſteddily to them under all difficulties, and to ſtrive, by all the methods conſiſtent with true wiſdom and benevolence, to diffuſe and propagate them

thro'

thro' the world. There have been many in this nation who have nobly diſtinguiſh'd themſelves in this work, and may their names be had in everlaſting remembrance and honour.

FINIS.

SERMON

Preach'd at

TOPSHAM

On Thurſday *November* the 29th, 1759,

Being the Day appointed for

A General Thankſgiving

For the late

SUCCESSES

OF

HIS MAJESTY'S ARMS by Sea & by Land,

And for the late

Very plentiful Harveſt.

6

By *J. FORTESCUE*, A. M.

EXON: Printed by ANDREW BRICE, and ſold by B. THORN and E. SCORE, Bookſellers, in the *Fore-ſtreet*. 1760.

TO

Robert Nedham, Esq;

SIR,

THIS Sermon, preach'd on the late Thanksgiving before a numerous Congregation at *Topsham*, and at their earnest Request made publick, craves your kind Patronage.--- The Author hopes you will not impute too much Presumption to him for sheltering himself under your Name, without your Consent first obtain'd, as he hath long had the Honour of being acquainted with your humane

and

and benevolent Way of Thinking, and is well aſſured, from your known Zeal to ſerve your Country, and your Kindred Connexions with that Great Commoner to whoſe wiſe and vigorous Meaſures, as Prime Miniſter, we, under Providence, owe the Succeſſes we have been commemorating, that a Diſcourſe of this kind will not be altogether unacceptable from,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient

and moſt humble Servant,

J. Forteſcue.

PSALM xviii. 47, 48, and Part of the 49th Verses.

The Lord liveth, and bleſſed be my ſtrong Helper: and praiſed be the God of my Salvation. Even the God that ſeeth that I be avenged: and ſubdueth the People unto me. It is he that deliveretb me from my cruel Enemies, and ſetteth me up above mine Adverſaries.

SEE here and admire a Great King, the moſt puiſſant Prince that ever ſwayed the *Jewiſh* Sceptre, aſcribing all the Reputation he had acquired over his own and the Enemies of his Kingdom to one that was higher than himſelf. The Royal Pſalmiſt, whoſe Words we have read to you, thought it no Diminution of his Honour to make himſelf and his People

Debtors

Debtors to the God of the Armies of *Israel* for the Victory, whenever they prospered in the Course of their Wars, but rather, with great Judgment as well as Piety, concluded, that such grateful Acknowledgment of Divine Mercies would add Stability to their Happiness, and Dignity to his Crown.— In like Manner does our most religious and gracious Sovereign, not confiding in the Splendor of any thing that is great, nor captivated with the loudest Applauses of a redeemed People, but banishing every Thought of Self-Sufficiency from his Royal Breast, remit us to our strong Helper, the God of our Salvation, whom he enjoins us to bless and praise on this appointed Day of Thanksgiving: As it is He that seeth that we be avenged of and subdueth the People unto us: As it is He that delivereth us from our cruel Enemies, and setteth us up above our Adversaries.

'Tis true that God was by a peculiar Relation the God of the Children of *Israel*; that they were for many Years under his immediate Government and Tuition, and in Consequence of this their Theocracy were by a Series of Miracles supported and maintained

tained for Forty Years in the barren Wilderneſs, and were thence conducted by the Exertion of the ſame Almighty Power into the promiſed Land. When they wanted a ſecure Retreat from their purſuing Enemies, at their Approach the Sea ſaw that and fled. When they ſought to take Poſſeſſion of their Inheritance, *Jordan* was driven back. When in pitch'd Battle their Enemies were put to flight, Stones from Heaven fell upon their devoted Heads; and, to make the Victory compleat, which otherwiſe Night muſt have interrupted, the Sun made no ſet that Day, but ſtood ſtill in *Gibeon*, and the Moon in the Valley of *Ajalon*.

Theſe with many other miraculous Aſſiſtances were peculiar, I ſay, to the *Iſraelites* in the Infancy of their Political Exiſtence, when God only might be ſaid to reign over them. But when they luſted to have, like other Nations, a King from among their Brethren, and were indulged in this their Waywardneſs, they became no longer entitled to thoſe extraordinary Teſtimonies of the Divine Favour, but were in this reſpect upon a Level with all other States and Kingdoms, who are governed and directed by the

the ordinary Influences of Providence. To them indeed he continued ſtill the Lord of Hoſts; but only ſo as to us or others, whom he will either crown with Succeſs or chaſtiſe with Defeat, according to his good Pleaſure: And this in ſo ſecret and inviſible a Way, that though in fact it be of the Lord, it ſhall ſeem as though the Head and Arm of Man had accompliſhed it.

So that God may be as truly ſaid to give us the Victory, and to deliver us from our Enemies, when Second Cauſes work their Effect, and Strength and Policy produce their uſual Conſequences, as though he had viſibly interpoſed with a Miracle.— We are not therefore to imagine, that when the holy Prophet talks, as he does in this Pſalm, of the Earth's ſhaking, the Foundations of the Heavens being removed, ſending out his Arrows and ſcattering his Enemies, his Lightning and diſcomfiting them, he means the Courſe of Nature was altered on his Account, and the Elements themſelves made to fight againſt his Adverſaries: — Whatever God is ſaid to do in theſe Paſſages, which are written in the Oriental figurative Stile with ſo much Magnificence, was done by Human

man Means and Inſtruments, properly bleſſed,— by improving every Opportunity of acquiring and preſerving a Superiority over the Enemy.

Hence we conclude that in all ſimilar Caſes we muſt exert our own natural Force and Strength; and, being thus Conquerors, aſcribe every Piece of Succeſs we meet with to God, the only Giver of Victory, whoſe Arm if it be not ſtretched out for us, as well as our own, in vain ſhould we hope for Deliverance.— We ſhould never forget in general that to him we are indebted for every proſperous Occurrence, and particularly now remember that our higſteſt Gratitude is juſtly due to Him from whom all theſe Public Bleſſings we now commemorate come, or rather flow.

Perhaps there is no one Point in which Mankind are more generally agreed, than in condemning with one Conſent the unſocial Sin of Ingratitude.— The Want of a due Senſe of Favours paſt ſtops, 'tis too well known to prove, the Current of our Beneficence towards each other. Men do not care to repeat their good Offices to the Unthankful. And if this be the Caſe between

Man and Man, Ingratitude cannot be thought leſs odious from Man to God: Nay, it muſt be infinitely more ſo, as the mutual good Turns one Creature can do for another bear no ſort of Proportion to the inexhauſtible Bounty of the Creator. —— The Deformity of Ingratitude may ſerve to ſhew the Beauty and the Amiableneſs of its oppoſite Virtue;-- how well it becometh the Juſt, the Wiſe, and the Good, to be thankful.

But how ſhall we raiſe our Gratitude to a proper Heighth? What Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving can we offer that will come up in any Degree to the Multitude and Magnitude of the Divine Benefits and Bleſſings whereof we now rejoice? Our utmoſt Efforts will be inſufficient; but theſe we ſhould exert, and accordingly examine each Mercy carefully and diſtinctly, in order the better to underſtand the Nature of the Obligation. For if we are ignorant of what we owe to Heaven, or ſlightly paſs it over, our Inſenſibility muſt needs render the Service of the Day imperfect. For which reaſon, I count it my Duty to exhort you to recollect in your grateful Breaſts, and thankfully attend to, each particular Bleſſing which,

as

as Proteſtants and *Britons*, we have received ſince the Commencement of the War, or, if you pleaſe, rather ſince the Beginning of the Year Seventeen Hundred Fifty Nine; a Year never to be forgotten by the People of this Land, till Years ſhall be no more.— Glad would the Enemy be could they expunge it from their Chronicle, that they might hide their Infamy and Diſgrace from the Generations to come.

For our Parts, we have all the Reaſon in the World to bleſs and praiſe our Strong Helper, the God of our Salvation, when we remember (and we cannot well forget ſo recent a Fact) to what a Depth of Deſpair the unpromiſing Beginning of the War had almoſt reduced the whole Nation. The Loſs,--I had almoſt ſaid the providential Loſs, of *Minorca*, (for to that perhaps, under God, we owe thoſe repeated Succeſſes which have crown'd our Warlike Labours) together with the Defeat of our Forces on the *Ohio*, ſtruck ſuch a univerſal Damp on the Spirits of our Countrymen, that even *Britons*, ever before known to be extremely fruitful in Reſources, as well as daring amidſt the greateſt Dangers -- (Let it never more be mentioned!)--

mistrusted their own Abilities to protect their Altars and their Firesides, and sought for Security in the puiny Aid of a Foreign imported Army. Hence there were great Searchings of Heart in every Patriot Breast. It was visible that weak Heads and faint Hearts had brought the Publick Weal into imminent Danger; that our Reputation abroad sunk with our Spirits at home; and that it was more than probable that our provoked Enemy, taking the Advantage of our thus visible Dismay, would come and take away both our Place and Nation.

Nothing less than the Sun of Righteousness arising with Healing in his Wings could dispel this dark and dismal Cloud which overcast this threatened Land of ours. And to Him, no doubt, were offer'd up many pious Prayers, that he would be pleased to protect and defend this precious Vine of his, this Church and People, that the wild Boar of the Wood might not root it up, nor any Beast of the Field devour it. In gracious Condescention to which we are met now, with joyful Lips, and the sincerest Gratitude of Heart, I hope, to acknowledge, that he hath laid Help upon our King, who was

Mighty

Mighty through his Bleſſing, and hath wrought for us great Redemption from our Fears. Our vaunting Enemies, that threatened to commence Hoſtilities on our Sea-Coaſts, have felt the Weight of our Arms on their own, and by ſenſible Experience been taught, that they have more to fear from Us than we from Them.

If we look towards the Continent, we ſhall there ſee ſuch a glorious Alteration in the Face of our Affairs, as muſt needs extort this Confeſſion from us, *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes.* How did we, with great Reaſon, but lately bewail the hard Lot and diſtreſs'd Condition of the poor *Hanoverians* and *Heſſians*, whoſe Country was as ſavagely over-run as unjuſtly invaded by the cruel Enemy? But they are now reinſtated in a quiet and peaceable Poſſeſſion of their own, Thanks be to the Lord, who appeared for them in the ever-memorable Battle fought in the Plains of *Minden*, where He who can ſave by a Few as well as by a Multitude aroſe, and by a few *Britiſh* Battalions, each Man an Hero! broke and diſpers'd the proud inſulting Foe, who for Number and Voracioufneſs were like

like the Locusts that filled and devoured the Land.

Hence if we turn our Eyes, and view our good Ally, the Champion of the Protestant Cause in that Part of the World, the heroick King of *Prussia*, struggling, not only with a peculiar Firmness of Mind, but even with unexpected Success, against that unnatural, but powerful, Confederacy of Three of the greatest Monarchies of *Europe* against him, this will administer fresh Matter of Thanksgiving. The Almighty Protector of religious States and Princes, professing his eternal Truth, hath hitherto wonderfully covered his and the Head of his illustrious Brother Prince *Ferdinand* in the Day of Battle; and whilst he continues still to cover them, we will not fear nor doubt but that, by their Means, the Reformed Churches abroad will soon have Rest from all their Enemies.

But, what more nearly concerns Us as *Englishmen*, we have the highest Reason to bless God, who hath not denied Us the Request of our Lips, but hath granted the King and Father of this People so long a Life as to see his Desire upon his Enemies. Our Happiness must surely stand strongly connected with

with his precious Life, whoſe Religion is truly Proteſtant, and whoſe natural Affection extendeth to his Subjects as to his Children. Long, therefore, may the King rejoice in thy Strength, O Lord! Long may he be exceeding glad of thy Salvation!

And, whilſt we thus pay our grateful Tribute to the Throne, let us not forget, at the ſame Time, that to the ſame Divine Providence we are indebted for that wiſe and virtuous Miniſtry, thoſe brave Commanders of our Fleets and Armies, thoſe intrepid Soldiers and Seamen, that are not to be parallell'd among any of the neighbouring Nations, whoſe Exploits have diſtinguiſh'd the Times wherein we live, and who by their ſage Counſels and heroick Atchievements have reſtored this lovely Iſland to its priſtine Glory, and rendred it (ſhall I ſay?) the Praiſe, the Terror, or the Envy, of the whole Earth.

If at any Time the Houſe of *Iſrael* groaned under the Oppreſſion of any Foreign Yoke, and they cried unto the Lord in their Trouble, he delivered them out of their Diſtreſs. And this he did by raiſing up for them Judges and Deliverers, Men on whom

he

he put his Spirit to qualify them for the important Task of saving his chosen People. Now, as he hath promised to be with his Church even to the End of the World, why may we not suppose the Divine Procedure to be the same now as heretofore? It is neither impious nor absurd to imagine, that in the Infancy of our Reformed Religion, when Popery on every Side threatened its immediate Dissolution, that an *Elizabeth* and a *Walsingham* should be raised up by Heaven to foster and protect it. So, now, in its maturer Age, when Inactivity and Irresolution, (to say no worse) had brought us to the Brink of Despair, and we were in the utmost Pain for our *Sion*, our numerous Enemies being so near at hand, and ready to swallow us up, why should it be thought incredible, that God should exalt One, chosen among the People, a Man whose Head and Heart seem both to be framed for that High Employment, the one clear and cool, the other warm and honest, to the last Degree; why should it be thought strange, I say, that God should design in his secret Councils to save the Church and State of *England*, under his Vicegerent *George*, by the Hands and

through

through the extraordinary Abilities of this Great Commoner?

Happy, thrice happy, *Britons!* notwithstanding all your Provocations, still the Favourites of Heaven! Under such a Prince, assisted by such a peerless Minister, at a Time when all Party Rage subsides, and the People all, with regard to Politicks (and wou'd they were so too in Matters of Religion!) are of one Heart and one Mind, who is he that can harm you, if ye be Followers of that which is good? The King may felicitate himself, that now in the Decline of Life, when it must be truly laborious for him to go in and out before a great People, and the Weight of Empire must sit excessively heavy on his aged Shoulders, that he hath found a Man after his own Heart, whose great Capacities and inflexible Integrity in the Administration, must bid Discord cease, & Harmony prevail, among us; who, by connecting the Interest of the People with that of their Prince, must make him an absolute Monarch of our Hearts and Purses. And every Subject hath this Consolation to think, that, whatever Storms and Tempests hard drive the Ship of the State, we

have at present (And long may he continue!) the most excellent Pilot at the Helm, to bring her, under God, into her Haven of Rest and Security.

When the Lord turned the Captivity of *Sion*, then were we like unto them that dream, said the Psalmist. In like Manner, when the Almighty Disposer of all Events began to declare in our Favour, the Rapidity of the Success wherewith our well-planned Enterprizes were crowned, was so astonishing, that we could hardly believe what we heard with our Ears. Whithersoever we turned our Arms we prospered. All the four several Parts of the known World have within the Compass of two revolving Years been Witnesses to the Martial Bravery of the *British* Strength, properly animated and conducted: Nay, perhaps, we have done more in that Time toward reducing the exorbitant Power of the ambitious House of *Bourbon*, than was done in the late Queen *Anne*'s Time, of glorious Memory, after so many successful though bloody Campaigns. In short, we have not wanted Matter of Triumph either by Sea or by Land. The Navy of our Enemy, by frequent Captures, hath

been

been more than half ruined, and their Trade, which supplied them with the Sinews of War, hath received a total Overthrow.

Particularly successful have we been in *North America*, the principal Object of the War; where, from the Reduction of *Louisbourg*, we have gone on conquering and to conquer, till *Quebec* itself, the Metropolis of their Northern World, hath submitted likewise to our victorious Arms.— A glorious Acquisition this, notwithstanding it was dearly purchased by the Loss of a General, who, tho' young in Command, had already displayed the rarest Talents in Military Knowledge and Practice; who was an Honour and Ornament to his Country; whose real Worth the King himself bore Testimony to, by shedding Tears at the sad Tidings of his Death; and whose Memory shall be sweet as long as History or pompous Monument shall record the Fame of *British* Heroes.

The Importance of *Quebec*'s being added to our Conquests is hence apparent, in that we shall from this Event probably soon become Masters of all *Canada*, and have it in our Power to drive far thence those common

Disturbers of the New as well as the Old World, and by that Means perpetuate Peace and Security to our neighbouring Colonies; who have not, I hope, forgot to thank God, who hath been so signally merciful to them, in redeeming them from the Hand of their cruel — scalping — Enemies.

May this Extension of the *English* Empire in the *Indian* Land be attended with this blessed Effect: May it make us ardently desirous to extend with ours the Kingdom of our Saviour Christ; — to communicate to the poor unenlightened Natives, who have quietly yielded up Possession of their Country to us, the comfortable News of a Saviour that taketh away the Sins of the World, and who have a Right, for their Worldly, to expect to reap of our Spiritual Things; — and to others, whom the *French*, for worldly Ends, have but imperfectly taught the Christian Mysteries, impart the whole Truth as it is in *Jesus*.

Since, then, the Lord of Hosts is thus with us, whom shall we fear? Since the God of *Jacob* is our Refuge, of whom shall we be afraid? The Experience of former and late Deliverances must needs be sure Ground

whereon

whereon to build our firmeſt Confidence in Aid Omnipotent.— He who hath delivered us from ſo great Dangers, and doth deliver us, in Him we may ſecurely truſt that He will ſtill continue to deliver us.

What then! though we know the Rage and the Fury that our incenſed Enemies cheriſh in their Hearts againſt us; though they encompaſs us with Words of Hatred, and with their ſlanderous Tongues go thro' the World, threatening with an invincible Armada to bring home to our Doors the Scourge of War, to convert our Land, which is as the Garden of *Eden*, into a barren Wilderneſs, & dye our ſilver Streams with *Engliſh* Blood; -- yet are they but vain Words: --- The Lord hath not ſent them; but he will put his Hook into their Noſe, and glad ſhall they be to return by the Way that they came.— It is ſcarce imaginable, indeed, that conſidering their many late Defeats and Diſappointments, and the unwearied Vigilance of our wide-ſpreading Fleet, which duely obſerves their Motions, that they will quit the Shelter of their own Ports, and with their Flat-bottomed unwieldy Boats court the Perils of the Winter Sea.

But

But ſhould they be ſo hardy as to venture forth, the laſt Efforts of their expiring Cauſe, it may, humbly, under Providence, be expected, that they will ſoon be arreſted in the midſt of their mad Career; that the Spirit of *Drake* and *Rawleigh* is ſtill reſident in the Hearts of our ſtout Sea Commanders, who will, like them, worthily tranſmit their Names to Poſterity, by deſtroying, or diſperſing at leaſt, this long-preparing boaſted Armament, and with it all our Fears of *French* Invaſion.

But ſuppoſing, — after all, — that every Circumſtance ſhould favour ſo as to bring their Fleet, unmoleſted by ours, to the Places of their Deſtination, and they ſhould diſplay their hoſtile Banners on our firm Land; — yet will we not be caſt down, nor be removed from our ſteadfaſt Hope. The Battle is the Lord's; and on Him we will ſecurely rely that he will go forth with our choſen Bands (our choice Militia), cauſe Victory to perch on the Heads of our well-appointed Generals, and deliver thoſe bold Invaders (who will, when diſcomfited, have no Place of Safety to flee unto) into our Hands.

Let

Let not, therefore, any gloomy Thought on this Occasion arise in any Heart to mar the joyful Solemnity of this Day; but let past animate our Expectations of future Blessings. Though we are now beating our Plowshears into Swords, and our Pruning-hooks into Spears, very properly providing for our Defence, should we be attack'd, yet if our Sins do not separate between God and Us, the Time cannot be far off when these brandished Instruments of War shall revert to their former peaceable State, and be again more useful Implements of Husbandry.

God be thanked that hitherto our Country hath been preserved from being the Seat of War, which is but another Name for a Scene of Desolation and Violence, Rapine and Murder. We have only heard with our Ears, and been told, but never sensibly felt, its Horrors; we have only yet been threatened and alarmed with the Approach of an Enemy, but have not seen him standing in our Gates.— These are great Mercies, and demand our solemn Praises. But, great as they are, they are vastly exceeded and outdone by a speedy, honourable, and lasting

Peace;

Peace; which we ſhould all moſt devoutly pray for, when every one may ſit down quietly, and enjoy ſecurely the Fruits of his Labour under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-tree.

'Tis Time now to draw toward a Concluſion. But, before we quit this pleaſing Subject, it muſt be obſerved, that, though we were not commanded by Royal Proclamation, we ſhould think ourſelves in all Duty bound to expreſs our Gratitude to the ſame Beneficent Being, who, by giving us the late very plentiful Harveſt, hath filled our Hearts with Food and Gladneſs. This is indeed a Mercy we have often before experienced. Fruitful Seaſons, and large Crops of Corn, are no uncommon Things in this Land, bleſſed with the Dew of Heaven, where both Hill and Vale do uſually and amply reward the Toil of the Huſbandman, by yielding a very great Increaſe. —— But, then, it muſt be conſider'd at the ſame Time, that the Value of a Benefit is not leſſened, but rather enhanced, by being repeated: And as we are taught to pray to Heaven Day by Day for our daily Bread, thence only it is to be expected. In vain would the Farmer be-

ſtow

ſtow his Labour and Manure on his Plow-lands, did not the Clouds drop Fatneſs on them when ſown; and empty would be his Barns, were the Windows of Heaven to be opened, and the Rains continually deſcend upon his Corn when he putteth in the Sickle.

'Tis, therefore, owing to the abundant Goodneſs of the Lord, who giveth the former and the latter Rain, that the Year is ever crowned with Plenty. Now, had he at this Time with-held his Mercy from us, and cut off the Staff of our Bread, how miſerable had our Caſe then been! — Increaſe of Mouths, and Decreaſe of Bread, would have brought us near unto Famine; and that, added to the Plague of War, would have been a Burthen perhaps too heavy for us to bear. But (Thanks be to Him whoſe Compaſſions fail not!) we have Corn in the greateſt Plenty: — Whilſt our Enemies lack, and ſuffer Hunger, we abound, and have enough to ſpare. — We ought not indeed to be high-minded, but fear; and it is cruel to inſult a vanquiſh'd Enemy. But let it not be thought impious or barbarous to ſay, (as with Reverence it is ſpoken) that, thro' the tender Mercies of God towards us, the

Affairs of *France* are now in so melancholy a Plight, that she must soon be reduced to this hard Dilemma, of begging either Bread or Peace at our Hands.

And now, then, how can we be sufficiently thankful for those inestimable Benefits conferred upon us in the Prosecution of this critical War, wherein both our Civil and Religious Liberties, every Thing that can be near and dear to us, were at Stake? Had we the eloquent Tongues of Angels we could not shew forth all his Praise, who hath thus hitherto delivered our Souls from Death, our Eyes from Tears, and our Feet from falling.— Whoso wisely considereth these Things, and understandeth the Loving-kindness of the Lord, will treasure up in his Heart these numerous Obligations to Gratitude, and Joy in the God of his Salvation: He will in private Meditation attentively scan and estimate the Worth and Importance of each particular Mercy received, and from the Unworthiness of the Receivers raise its Value to the highest Pitch. He will muse on these Things till a celestial Fire kindles in his Heart, and then at length he will speak with his Tongue, and bless there-

with

with our God, who helpeth us, and poureth out his Benefits upon us.

To our Praiſes and Thankſgivings we ſhould not forget to annex our ſincereſt Vows, & firmeſt Reſolutions, to walk henceforward in Newneſs of Life, as becometh thoſe that are redeemed of the Lord. For be aſſured that unleſs we do this in good Earneſt, we can never preſerve the Intereſt we ſeem to have at preſent in the Court of Heaven. The Lord loveth Righteouſneſs, his Countenance will behold only the Thing that is juſt. Unholineſs, as well as Unthankfulneſs, will render every Expectation of future Favours vain; and therefore if we ſuffer it to continue among us, it is not impoſſible, nor improbable, that quite a different Turn may be yet given to our Affairs; that our preſent Joy may be ſoon turned into Heavineſs, and they that hate us, though now bronght very low, may yet be Lords over us, and rule us with a Rod of Iron.

But this I truſt in God will not be our Caſe, eſpecially as we may hope for better Things from the uncommon Spirit of Patriotiſm which now happily prevails, and which muſt teach us that we cannot better

ſerve our Country than by ſerving the King of Heaven, and be thence induced to put away the Evil of our Doings, to ceaſe to do Evil, and learn to do well. If thus we remove all Iniquity far from us, and by cleaving unto God recommend ourſelves to his Divine Approbation, then no doubt He will cleave unto us, and finiſh the good Work he hath begun for us. Then may we hope that he will appear again for us in Battle, ſcatter our Enemies that delight in War, and ever crown our honeſt Endeavours with Succeſs.— Only let us fear God, and, conſidering what great Things he hath done for us, ſerve him in Sincerity and Truth; and then, without all peradventure, He will continue to ſet us high among the Nations around us, and make them all pay chearful Homage to our Flag. He will prolong the Life of our Great King, and ſtill entruſt the Reins of Government with his moſt accompliſhed Miniſter. He will revive and confirm in every Breaſt the Love of his Country, and ſtrengthen every Hand that ſhall unſheath the Sword in its Defence. In ſhort, he will encamp around our Armies by Land, putting the Dread of them on every Oppo-

nent;

nent; and by Sea, controuling the Fury of the Winds, ſecurely conduct our Royal Navy to further Conqueſts and Acquiſitions. Hence *Engliſhmen* ſhall, in all the Martial World, be deemed Men of Renown; and Foreigners, reverſing their Judgments, ſhall ſay of us, -- Happy are the People that are in ſuch a Caſe: Yea, bleſſed are the People who have the Lord for their God.

If any Thing more needs be added, it is, that we ſhould not forget, in order to compleat the Solemnity of this Day, to do Good and communicate to the Poor, ſeeing with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleaſed. As our Father which is in Heaven hath been thus merciful to Us, We who have this World's Goods, and ſee our Brethren have Need, ſhould not ſhut up our Compaſſion from them, leſt we be juſtly hereafter upbraided; *Thou wicked Servant, ſhouldſt not thou have had Compaſſion on thy Fellow Servant, even as I had Pity on thee?* — If we deem it right to cloath our naked Enemy *, (and no doubt it is a moſt exalted Piece of Charity) it muſt be ſurely thought a Duty of *equal* Obligation at

* A Collection for cloathing the *French* Priſoners was made juſt before the preaching of this Sermon.

at least to relieve the Wants of those, who, by being born in the same Country, and bred in the same Religion with ourselves, demand, when in Necessity, our principal Attention.— As we have with great Liberality done the one, I hope we shall not leave the other undone.

To conclude: —— May the Lord Jehovah accept the Prayers and Praises, the Alms and Oblations, that are this Day offered up to him, and be our everlasting Strength! — Yet greater Prosperity may he give to his Anointed, our august Sovereign, and with his favourable Kindness evermore defend him and his Royal House as with a Shield! Still may he continue to go forth with our Fleets and Armies, until our Adversaries, convinced at length that God of a Truth is with us, submit to equitable Terms of Peace! — Which that they may soon do, and thereby avoid the Effusion of more Christian Blood, God of his infinite Mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with the Holy Ghost, be rendered all Laud and Honour, Love, Service, and Thanksgiving, now and ever!

FINIS.

A

SERMON

PREACHED at

TIVERTON, DEVON.

November 29, 1759.

Being the Day appointed for a

PUBLIC THANKSGIVING.

By JOHN KIDDELL.

7.

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JER. IX. 23, 24.

Thus ſaith the Lord, Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this; that he underſtandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciſe loving-kindneſs, judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth; for in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.

GOD by the Prophet, in the words now read, cautions the Jews againſt a very ridiculous folly and dangerous error; which, not only ſingle men, but whole nations, do too commonly fall into: and that is, They are apt to be mightily elated with thoſe natural

providence over us, and the whole creation around us, is the ſole foundation of all ſolid confidence and hope, the alone ſource of all rational joy and triumph, the only bulwark of human happineſs worthy to be gloried in. Wherefore then with great reaſon God ſolemnly admoniſhes his people: *Thus ſaith the Lord; let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this: that he underſtandeth, and knoweth me; that I am the Lord which exerciſe loving-kindneſs, judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth: for in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.*

We are now aſſembled together to offer up our ſolemn ſacrifice of thankſgiving to God for thoſe many ſignal favours and glorious ſucceſſes, which he has been pleaſed to vouchſafe to this nation thro' the courſe of the preſent year. What then do we think to be the moral intention of this duty? Why are we enjoined to return thanks to God for bleſſings received? Can he be pleaſed or delighted with our praiſes on account of any benefit, which he derives to himſelf from them? Can we hereby add any thing to his eſſential glory and bleſſedneſs? By no means. The whole deſign of this duty is to keep up within our own minds a ſenſe of our dependance upon God, and of our obligations to him; to raiſe our thoughts above the immediate and viſible cauſes of the national proſ-

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perity and glory; to restrain us from vainly idolizing or confiding in secondary and inferior agents; to teach us to regard our victorious fleets and armies but as means made use of by the almighty Sovereign of the world to carry on his righteous designs; to put us in remembrance, that our worthy patriots, our great statesmen, our wise counsellors, our able commanders, are but instruments in his hands to accomplish the high purposes of his gracious providence; to imprint upon our souls the most lively apprehensions of him, as the effective cause and original giver of every good and perfect gift; to cherish and strengthen within us sentiments of humility and pious gratitude towards him; and to dispose us to glory only in his supreme dominion over us. To comply therefore with the design of setting apart this day, I have chosen the words now read to you, and they naturally lead me to make the two following observations:

First. That neither wisdom, might, nor riches are fit objects to be confided or gloried in: *Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches.*

Secondly. That our knowledge of God's supreme and most righteous providence over the world is alone worthy to be glo-

gloried in by us, as it is the only foundation of our ſecurity and happineſs. *But let him that glorieth, glory in this: that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe loving-kindneſs, judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth: for in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.*

And then apply the ſubject to the occaſion of this day.

Firſt. I obſerve that neither wiſdom, might, nor riches are fit objects to be confided or gloried in.

Wiſdom; or an extenſive knowledge, profound ſkill, refined policy in managing things for a perſon's own intereſt: Power; or an ability to execute thoſe ſchemes, and to repel all the oppoſition of his adverſaries: Riches; or the poſſeſſion of thoſe things, which conſtitute worldly proſperity and grandeur: Theſe are advantages, which above all others ſwell the mind with empty notions of its own ſelf-ſufficiency; and produce a boaſtful vanity and inſolence: and therefore theſe are particularly enumerated in the words of the text. I ſhall conſider each of them ſeperately.

1. *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom.* Did we conſider that all out wiſdom is derived from God, the author of our frame; that, whatever eminence we poſſeſs in this

reſpect,

respect, we have received it from him; and that upon his will and good pleasure we depend for the continuance of it: we should see but little reason to be self confident, vain, and boastful on this account. *For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* 1 Cor. iv. 7. And as God is the original fountain of all human wisdom; so he can bound and limit, controul and direct it in all its operations and effects; he can withdraw the use of it, when he pleases; he can extinguish the brightest understanding; throw a cloud over the most penetrating judgment; spread confusion thro' the counsels of the most sagacious; baffle the measures of the ablest politicians; and make the best formed schemes, instead of accomplishing their ends, serve to draw down ruin and destruction upon the heads of their authors; and thus he can render all the efforts of human wisdom vain and fruitless. It was a saying among the heathens, that * fortune (by which they understood the providence of God, bringing about events by secret and hidden causes) makes him a fool whom she intends to destroy. To the same purpose is the language of scripture. *The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, for it is*

 written,

* Stultum facit fortuna, quem vult perdere. Syri sententiæ.

written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. 1 Cor. iii. 19, 20. And so exceedingly vain are they, that under the direction of God's all-comprehensive and unerring wisdom, even the most unlikely means, the most despised and contemptible instruments shall prevail against them; so that the foolish things of the world shall confound the wise.

Do but then set human wisdom in comparison with the divine; and all its little glitterings will disappear and totally vanish away before the boundless splendor of his wisdom, whose foolishness is wiser than men.

2. *Let not the mighty man glory in his might.* Our own personal strength, and bravery, and courage, how little and how inconsiderable a thing is it? How insignificant and useless against innumerable dangers and evils, which beset us around? How impotent and vain against those many injuries, to which we are exposed? How weak and defenceless against that multitude of enemies, which may assault us? And therefore how inadequate and insufficient to our security and happiness? To read those expostulations of God with Job, (Chap. xl. 9—14.) is sufficient to silence all the boastings of the man, vain of his might and strength. *Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Deck thyself now with majesty and excel-*

excellency, and array thyself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath; and behold every one that is proud, and abase him. Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together, and bind their faces in secret. Then will I also confess unto thee, that thine own right hand can save thee.

But if we further consider might, as comprehending all those forces and succours, which a man is capable of procuring for his defence; even then man will appear a very feeble and helpless creature. Where among our brethren, the sons of men, can we find protection and security? *Surely* (as the psalmist says, psalm lxii. 9.) *men of low degree are vanity* (both in respect of their inability to help us, and of the fickleness and inconstancy of their affection towards us) *and men of high degree are a lie* (all their exterior pomp and grandeur, and magnificence, is but an empty vapour, a shining delusion) *to be laid in the balance they are altogether lighter than vanity.* And if there was no other thing to convince us, that there is no security, no solid dependance to be placed upon even the greatest of the sons of men: this one circumstance would be sufficient; that he is a mortal being, continually liable to death; *that his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth,*

in that very day his thoughts perish, psalm cxlvi. 4.

But put the case, that we ourselves were numbered among the mighty gods of the earth; or at least that we are incorporated into those mighty national societies, which have the most powerful armies and the most warlike troops, supplied with all the implements of war, and armed with all the machines of slaughter and death, ready to act with united force for our defence. Certain it is, that nothing elates the mind of man with so much pride and vanity as this; nothing is so much confided and gloried in. The ancient Germans boasted before Cæsar *, that they had a people among them, whom not even the immortal gods could equal; and that they could subdue the greatest power upon earth. And no less haughtily that same Cæsar tells the Spaniards †, that the Roman people had ten legions, who could not only withstand them, but even storm heaven itself. But such sayings as these are as full of extravagance and absurdity, as of impiety. In truth, not the most numerous and martial forces can yield us any foundation for confidence and security.

* Quibus (i. e. suevis) ne dii quidem immortales pares esse possint: reliquum quidem in terris esse neminem, quem non superare possint. Cæsar de Bello Gallico, L. 4. Cap. 7.

† An——non animum advertebatis, x habere legiones populum Romanum, quæ non solum vobis obsistere, sed etiam cœlum diruere possent?

ſecurity. So ſtrange are the accidents and occurrences of things; ſo many ways has God to humble the pride of man: that if he pleaſes, when we cry to theſe our companions to deliver us, the wind ſhall carry them all away, vanity ſhall take them. *There is no king ſaved by the multitude of an hoſt; a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength. An horſe is a vain thing for ſafety, neither ſhall he deliver any by his great ſtrength*, pſal. xxxiii. 16, 17.

Moreover, beſides all this let us ſuppoſe, that we have all the advantages of ſituation to boaſt of, ſtrong-holds and mighty bulwarks to ſcreen us, the great ocean to encircle us, and proud navies to ſtrike terror into our enemies: yet how eaſy is it to the Almighty to level all theſe our honours in the duſt, to make a path for our enemies through the mighty waters, to deliver us into their hands, and to ſay to us as he did to Edom, Jer. xlix. 16. *Thy terribleneſs hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock, that holdeſt the height of the hill: tho' thou ſhouldeſt make thy neſt as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, ſaith the Lord* *. Nay, how

* When the Gauls under Vercingetarix were in arms againſt Cæſar, they had all the advantages of ſituation on their ſide. He was ſeparated from them by the mountains of the Cevennes, which (it being in the depth of winter) were covered with ſnow, ſix feet deep; and over which, at that ſeaſon of the year, never human foot had trod. This

how eaſily can he turn all this our glory into ſhame? And though we have none but enfeebled, exhauſted, vanquiſhed enemies to oppoſe us, yet how eaſily can he clothe them with victory, and cauſe them to lay waſte all our ſtrength in the fury of battle, and in the pride of triumph? Thus by enabling the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, he can convince human vanity, that even the weakneſs of God is ſtronger than men.

3. *Let not the rich man glory in his riches.* Riches undoubtedly have their advantages; but they are among the laſt things, which a wiſe man, or a wiſe nation, would confide or glory in. The riches of a private perſon add

This gave them ſuch confidence of their ſafety, that they were under no apprehenſion of a ſurprize from him: Quod ſe Cevenna, ut muro, munitos exiſtimabant, ac ne ſingulari quidem unquam homini eo tempore anni ſemitæ patuerant, Cæſar de Bello Gallico. L. 7. Cap. 8. But Cæſar ſurmounted all theſe difficulties, opened a way for his army, and ſoon convinced them, how vain their confidence had been. And does not this remind us of a ſimilar fate, which befell the modern Gauls in the late victory obtained over them by the brave general Wolfe at Quebec, where Providence ſo remarkably appeared on our ſide? Could an advantageous ſituation, or the ſtrongeſt fortifications of art and nature have afforded any certain ſecurity, the French had been ſecure. To evince the truth of this, we need only repeat what admiral Saunders ſays in his letter to the Right Hon. Mr. Secretary Pitt, "When general Wolfe, and the troops with him, had landed, the difficulty of gaining the top of the hill is ſcarce credible: it was very ſteep in its aſcent, and high, and had no path where two could go abreaſt; but they were obliged to pull themſelves up by the ſtumps and boughs of trees, that covered the declivity." But God's right hand and holy arm hath gotten him the victory.

add no real worth or excellence to the possessor: frequently they nourish bad qualities of mind within him, and are the source of a variety of evils to him. The possession of them is very unstable and uncertain; and they often take to themselves wings, and fly away, as an eagle towards heaven.

The wealth and opulence of a nation (whether it is the product of fertile lands, or the acquisition of commerce) serves only when employed aright, to procure forces for the publick defence; and therefore can be the object of no greater confidence than I have shewn those forces to be, which it procures. But very generally riches prove destructive to national virtue, and corrupt the publick morals; they emasculate the minds of a people, unbend the nerves of their fortitude and courage, and sink them into a state of luxury and softness; and thus eat out the very sinews and strength of government itself. For this reason Lycurgus, the wise law-giver of the Spartans consider'd riches as the most fatal enemy of a commonwealth; and taught his people to prefer an honourable and virtuous poverty. And the experience of that people afterwards gave testimony to the wisdom of their admired legislator. "Whilst Sparta (says a learned and excellent French author *) remained poor, and persisted in the contempt

* Rollin on the love of poverty instituted at Sparta, in his ancient history, &c.

contempt of gold and ſilver, which continued for ſeveral ages, ſhe was powerful and glorious; and the commencement of her decline may be dated from the time, when ſhe began to break through the ſevere prohibition of Lycurgus againſt the uſe of gold and ſilver money." And indeed he has ſo far the experience of the whole world on his ſide, as that all the ancient empires of the earth have been deſtroyed by thoſe corruptions, of which their own exorbitant wealth and riches have been the ſource.

Moreover; riches have a natural tendency, not only to break down the barrier of a nation's ſecurity by undermining the foundation of it's moral principles and manners, but to raiſe up and multiply foreign adverſaries againſt it. The greater are a people's riches, the greater is the plunder to be ravaged from them, and the ſtronger is the allurement to an ambitious and greedy enemy to aſſault them. What therefore God threatens to the Ammonites, whom riches and wealth had corrupted, is nothing more than was to be expected in the natural courſe of things. *Wherefore glorieſt thou in the vallies, thy flowing valley, O backſliding daughter? that truſted in her treaſures, ſaying, Who ſhall come unto me? Behold I will bring a fear upon thee, ſaith the Lord God of hoſts, from all thoſe that be about thee, and ye ſhall be driven out every man right forth, and none*

none shall gather up him that wandereth, Jer. xlix. 4, 5. When a nation therefore, boastful of its riches, is thus brought to destruction by them; how vain does this it's glory and confidence appear? How just the punishment which follows? And what wise spectator is not ready to contemn and reproach such a people, and to say; Lo! this is the nation that made not God its strength; but trusted in the abundance of its riches, and strengthened itself in its wickedness?

From these reflections then upon wisdom, might, and riches, what have we to do, but to lift up our hearts in humble adoration of the almighty and all-righteous providence of God, and devoutly acknowledge, that no flesh should glory in his presence?

We through the preceding course of the present year have seen our publick counsels conducted with great wisdom and prudence. We have seen our armies spread terror and dismay thro' the hosts of our enemies; and gather up the fairest laurels of victory and military glory. We have seen our fleets arrived to that perfection of strength and excellency, as to be the admiration of all the nations around us, and the dread and scourge of our enemies in every climate of the earth. We have seen our land loaded with her treasures in a rich abundance: the weather remarkably favourable during the appointed times of harvest: the sun walking in his strength, almost without a cloud,

one day, one week after another; and ſhining forth upon the ripened grain, as if purpoſely inſtructed by his glorious Maker to lengthen out the ſeaſon for laying up the corn in its ſtore-houſes; and thereby to ſupply the want of thoſe numerous hands, which had been called off * to wield the weapons of war, from their more delightful employment of gathering in the fruits of the earth. We have ſeen the national wealth mightily encreaſed by many and great acquiſitions from our enemies; and a proſperous commerce perpetually pouring in freſh riches upon us. Amidſt this dazzling luſtre of national wiſdom, might, and riches, I would hope, we do not loſe ſight of the great author and ſource of all this national felicity and glory, the only ſupreme object of our confidence, joy, and gratitude. But let human vanity and pride ſpeak out. Is there no danger of this in our preſent circumſtances? Deut. xxxii. 15. *Jeſhurun waxed fat, and kicked; then he forſook God which made him, and lightly eſteemed the rock of his ſalvation.* To guard ourſelves then againſt falling into this dangerous error and impiety, let even the appointment of this day inſtruct us. The king calls upon us from the throne to offer up our ſolemn thankſgiving to God for the wonderful goodneſs of his providence towards us: He does this with the advice of his council; among whom are thoſe

* viz. to ſerve in the militia.

thoſe nobles and great ſtateſmen of our land, to whom under God we owe our publick proſperity and happineſs. Theſe great perſonages themſelves direct us to conſider them but as the miniſters of God to us for good, the inſtruments of his divine and gracious providence; and admoniſh us, that all our praiſes are ultimately due to that ſovereign Ruler of the world, who ſitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſhoppers; who ſtretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and ſpreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; who bringeth the princes to nothing; who maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. But this leads me to obſerve,

Secondly: That our knowledge of God's ſupreme and moſt righteous providence over the world is alone worthy to be gloried in by us; as it is the only foundation of our ſecurity and happineſs. *But let him that glorieth, glory in this; that he underſtandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord which exerciſe loving-kindneſs, judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth: for in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.*

It cannot but have appeared from what has been ſpoken under the preceeding head of diſcourſe, that there is no ſolid foundation for our hope and truſt but in the pro-

vidence of God. Let us then briefly recollect the clear and full discoveries, which God has given us, of his being, of his supreme and universal government, and of his righteous and equal administration of affairs.

All nature bears the visible impressions of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness. All the changes and events, which happen around us, loudly declare the operation of his supreme and universal providence. The bare prospect of the heavens and of the earth unfolds to us such a scene of grandeur and magnificence, as sufficiently discovers the whole to be the workmanship of a being infinitely wise and powerful. The structure, furniture, and beauty of this great universe; the connection, dependance, and mutual influences of all its parts; gloriously reveal the great Creator to all his rational and intelligent offspring. So conspicuous are these signatures of his hand; so well adapted to all capacities, that in all ages and in all nations the being of a God has been acknowledged for a most certain truth. Thus the psalmist speaking of the works of nature, tells us. *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out thro' all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.* Psal. xix. 3, 4.

And as we know that he is the creator of all things: so with equal certainty we understand

underſtand and know him to be the Lord, to be the ſupreme governour of the world, to have an abſolute and unlimited dominion; againſt which no reſiſtance can be formed, and to which all created might muſt neceſſarily be ſubject. *God hath ſpoken once; twice have I heard this* (ſays the Pſalmiſt, Pſ. lxii: 11.) *that power belongeth unto God.* As if he had ſaid, of this we have the higheſt poſſible proof and certainty; that power, original, uncontroulable power is the ſole property of God; that he is the only ſource and fountain of all power. And certainly he, that created all beings, and gave them their reſpective capacities and powers, muſt himſelf poſſeſs an abſolute dominion over the works of his own hands; muſt be capable of reſuming theſe his own gifts at his pleaſure, or of reſtraining and limiting the exerciſe of them, in what manner he ſees fit. Conſequently, no force can be employed in oppoſition to him; no power can be exerted, but under his influence and by his aſſiſtance. *Thine, O Lord, is the greatneſs, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majeſty: for all that is in the heaven, and in the earth, is thine: thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reigneſt over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give ſtrength unto all.* 1 Chron. xxix.

xxix. 11, 12. *Among the Gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. All nations whom thou haſt made ſhall come and worſhip before thee, O Lord; and ſhall glorify thy name. For thou art great, and doeſt wonderous things; thou art God alone.* Pſalm lxxxvi. 8, 9, 10.

In the very nature of things then the dominion of God is unrivalled and reſiſtleſs. And if we ſearch into the hiſtories of nations and empires; we ſhall on infinite occaſions diſcern the great ruler of the world, in the moſt unbounded and unreſtrained exerciſe of this his univerſal dominion, bringing about events, and determining the conſequences of thoſe events, in ſpite of all the wiſdom and policy, the might and ſtrength of mortal men. To mention but one inſtance, which ſcripture affords us, the taking of ancient Babylon by the Medes and Perſians. This city was the ſeat of the vaſt Aſſyrian empire; was famous throughout the Eaſt for knowledge, wiſdom, and learning; boaſted of its magi and aſtrologers, who confidently predicted eternal proſperity and glory to it; its gates were of braſs; its walls, by their height and ſtrength, were impregnable againſt any force, which could be brought againſt it, with a mighty army to defend them: and when Cyrus undertook the ſiege, its inhabitants were ſupplied with proviſions for

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no leſs than twenty years. So that it is not ſufficient to ſay, that at this time, when this event was predicted, the accompliſhment of it was in the higheſt degree improbable; but even, when the enemy appeared before it, the beſieged were ſo little intimidated, ſo confident and ſecure, that they regarded the attempt with ſcorn, nor even ſuffered themſelves to be interrupted by it in the purſuit of any of their pleaſures or debaucheries: and Cyrus himſelf deſpaired of ſucceeding by any open attack. See now, how the almighty hand of God led and conducted him. He diverted the courſe of the great river Euphrates, and by its channel entered and ſurprized the city; whilſt the king and nobles of Babylon were drowned in feſtivity and drunkenneſs. But obſerve farther the all-diſpoſing providence of God, in determining the future conſequences of things. By the ſame event, by the ſame inſtrument, which brought ruin and deſtruction upon this mighty empire, God raiſes up the Jews; a wretched, deſpiſed, enſlaved people; held in miſerable captivity and bondage at Babylon: reſtores them to their native land: and eſtabliſhes them a reſpectable and proſperous nation. What a wonderful inſtance is this of the almighty power of God? And how exactly does he fulfil what he had promiſed to the Jews. *Thus ſaith the Lord thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from*

from the womb; I am the Lord that maketh all things, that ſtretcheth forth the heavens alone, that ſpreadeth abroad the earth by myſelf: That fruſtrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad (alluding to the vain Predictions of the aſtrologers) *that turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledge fooliſh: That confirmeth the word of his ſervant, and performeth the counſel of his meſſengers; that ſaith to Jeruſalem, Thou ſhalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye ſhall be built, and I will raiſe up the decayed places thereof: That ſaith to the deep* (to the Euphrates) *be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That ſaith of Cyrus, He is my ſhepherd, and ſhall perform all my pleaſure, even ſaying to Jeruſalem, Thou ſhalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation ſhall be laid.* Iſaiah xliv. 24—28.

Moreover; as we thus know him to be the Lord; ſo no leſs certain are we, that he exerciſeth loving-kindneſs, judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth; and that in theſe things he delighteth. He is the author of being; the giver of life; the ſource of all that happineſs, which we and all our fellow-creatures enjoy; he opens his hand and fills us with good; he cauſeth the ſun to know his riſing and going down; he gives rain from heaven and fruitful ſeaſons, and fills our heart with food and gladneſs; he loads the earth with plenty, and crowns the

year

year with goodness. Every thing about us displays his universal benevolence, and proclaims his affection towards all. What stronger assurance then can we have, that in his government of the world he will, as the common parent of all, without respect of persons act towards all with lenity, equity, and righteousness? Psal. xxxiii. 4, 5, 10, 11, 12. *The word of the Lord is right, and all his works are done in truth. He loveth righteousness and judgment; the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.*

Thus then we know that the affairs of the world are in the hands of an infinitely righteous and good Being: and it is infinitely happy for us to be assured of this joyful truth; since from hence we derive the firmest assurance of possessing every private and publick blessing in that measure and degree, which to infinite wisdom and infinite goodness seems convenient for us. In the knowledge therefore of this truth, and in that only, every man will glory and triumph. Psal. xcvii. 1. *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.*

Thus have I finiſhed what I propoſed from the text; and will now apply the ſubject to the occaſion of this day.

1. Let us be ever thankful to God for his marvellous goodneſs towards our native country. Pſal. xlviii. 11—14. *Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, becauſe of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, conſider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever.* Carefully ſurvey that ſtate of ſecurity, glory, and triumph, to which God hath raiſed our native country. But let us remember, that it is he who hath done thoſe great things for us; that without him all our ſtrength and courage, all our bulwarks, armies, and fleets; all our wealth and riches are things of nought. Of this he has given us the moſt convincing proofs through the courſe of this war. At the commencement of it, when our ſtrength was entire and unbroken; before any of our valuable blood had been ſhed; or any of our riches had been exhauſted: With what ſhame and diſhonour did our fleet return from the Mediterranean ſea, and Minorca fall into the enemies hands. What various defeats did we receive; what ſavage cruelties did we ſuffer from the hands of our enemies in the wild deſarts of America? What diſunion of our counſels, and murmuring among

mong our people at home? Who hath repaired those breaches? Who hath given union, wisdom, steadiness, and vigour to our counsels? Who hath strengthened the hands of our soldiers, and brought back victory to them in the day of battle? Again; what mighty powers of the earth have been engaged against us? How inconsiderable the troops of us and of our allies, when set in comparison? But who hath poured confusion upon their measures? Who hath turned their wise men backward? Who hath withheld skill and ability from their generals? Who hath caused their superior numbers to flee away before our conquering sword? Is it not the Lord, who can enable one to pursue a thousand, and two to put ten thousand to flight? Let us then say, Psal. lxxvi. 3, 5—12. *There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. The stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep; and none of the men of might have found their hands. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a deep sleep. Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry? Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still. When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain. Vow and pay unto the Lord your*

God; let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared. He shall cut off the spirit of princes; he is terrible to the kings of the earth.

2. Gratitude to the best of kings should still encrease our thankfulness to God for the blessings received. God exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; he delighteth in these things, and in those who imitate him herein. One might be almost tempted to conclude from hence, that God has blessed our monarch with such an extraordinary length of days, and in the time of his old age crowned his arms with such signal successes; as if on purpose to honour and reward him in the most open manner for that justice and righteousness, mildness and clemency which he has exercised in his government over us. Through the long course of his reign, how steadily has he pursued the true interest and happiness of his subjects? No instance of oppression, violence or cruelty from his hands have ever stained his annals. The sacred rights of publick liberty have been inviolably preserved. The properties of men guarded by the free, uninterrupted administration of equal laws: All tyranny over the consciences of men, and persecution on account of religion, discountenanced and repressed. He hath judged the people with righteousness, and the poor with judgment, The mountains have brought peace to the people,

people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He hath judged the poor of the people, he hath saved the children of the needy, he hath broken in pieces the oppressor. Equity and mildness have been the distinguishing excellencies of his government. This is a glorious, but it is a true description of his reign. And shall we not rejoice in the honours and rewards, which God has conferred upon him? Let us then with united hearts and voices give thanks, and say, Psal. xxi. 3, 4, 5, 13. *Thou presentest him* prevent *with the blessings of goodness; thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever. His glory is great in thy salvation; honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him. Be thou exalted, O Lord, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.*

3. We ought, by every becoming expression of gratitude and respect, to do honour to those, whom God has made the instruments of his good providence towards us. What greater obligation can we be under? What higher debt of gratitude can we owe to any of our fellow-creatures, than to those who employ their time, devote their abilities, expose themselves to fatigues, to dangers, and to death; in order to guard the publick safety, to secure us and our properties from the ravages of our mercileſs enemies, and to preserve peace and quiet within

within our borders? When we ſee a general engaged in an enterprize, the execution of which, he himſelf ſees, will be attended with the moſt alarming dangers; yet calmly determining to riſk all for his country *: When we ſee him bleeding with wounds; yet continuing with a ſteady intrepidity to lead on his troops againſt the common enemy: When we ſee him juſt expiring; yet rejoicing in death at the ſignal ſervice, which he had done his country: What heart does not feel the warmeſt affection and gratitude to his memory †? When we ſee others returning from conqueſt and victory, in ſight of their native ſhore, juſt ready to find reſt from their toils, and to receive the congratulations of their fellow-ſubjects; yet on a freſh alarm, unaſked, of their own voluntary choice, returning to ſcenes of ſlaughter and of death ‡: Surely we cannot be too grateful to ſuch men. God has honoured them by inſpiring them with ſuch exalted minds, and by making them the inſtruments of his wonderful goodneſs towards us; and we ought to honour them.

4. *Laſtly:* Let us ſhew mercy to the poor; and particularly, on the preſent occaſion,

* See the late general Wolfe's letter to the Right Hon. Mr. Secretary Pitt.

† Theſe particulars are related of the late general Wolfe.

‡ When admiral Saunders, and general Townſhend, were entered the channel, on their return from Quebec; being informed of the ſailing of the Breſt fleet, they altered their courſe, and ſailed to join Sir Edward Hawke.

caſion, let us chearfully beſtow our alms. I ſhall at preſent uſe no other argument with you than this, that a faithful diſcharge of the amiable offices of humanity and goodneſs is the moſt certain method of procuring the favour and protection of divine providence; and, of conſequence, this will be the beſt ſecurity of national proſperity and glory. Perhaps that noble ſpirit diſcovered in our publick charities (and which of late has been carried to that pitch of generoſity and goodneſs, as even to relieve our enemies, the unhappy French priſoners) may be one great reaſon of our preſent national glory. Certain it is that the prophet Iſaiah, ſpeaking in the name of God himſelf, urges the diſcharge of thoſe duties upon the Jewiſh nation from this conſideration. *Then ſhall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health ſhall ſpring forth ſpeedily; and thy righteouſneſs ſhall go before thee, the glory of the Lord ſhall be thy rereward.* Iſaiah lviii. 8.

F I N I S.